

# World **FILM** news



**RALPH RICHARDSON—LAURENCE OLIVIER—ALFRED HITCHCOCK**

**CAMERAMAN IN SPAIN  
THE CENSOR and SYDNEY STREET  
EXCLUSIVE — CONQUEST of the AIR  
MY GRANDMOTHER and WALT DISNEY**

**MAXIM GORKI  
STUART LEGG  
LESLIE PERKOFF  
E. A. HARDING  
EZRA GOODMAN**

**MARCH 1936**



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## The CENSOR and SYDNEY STREET

**T**HE film-world with its play of names, sensational and unsteady in its juggling with stars, is more sober in its treatment of craftsmen. Griffith, Disney, Eisenstein, Duvivier—such names have solid foundations. Likewise the name Alfred Hitchcock, one of the few real English contributions to film technique.

Unlike too many of his colleagues, Hitchcock often rejects the Philistine insensitivity to film problems. Thus his unequivocal recognition of the writer as the prime factor in the substance of the dramatic film, his prophecy of the future obsolescence of the director unless his status and power expand to that of the producer, and his attitude to the question of universal appeal which he considers detrimental to film art.

He is a product of British films, yet where most British films lack individuality, he has at least specialised in a peculiar treatment and applied a measure of realism in portraying characters. And on the lack of individuality in British films he says:

"I think the shortage of personnel in this country is largely to blame. We have to con-

sider that we're in competition with Hollywood. In the case of France this is not so marked, since only comparatively few of their talented people percolate through to Hollywood. People like Bauer remain, and, although Laughton and Donat now remain in England, their price value has gone up since their contact with Hollywood, and this puts them out of the reach of many British producers. It is because of the language question that Hollywood has been able to draw so much on British talent.

"It is all a root problem, yet I would say that English humour has got individuality, for comedy has suited the English temper. Yet nothing is really being done to develop talent here, although I have sometimes taken on untried people. There is an absence of good technicians, particularly a lack of first-class cameramen. The whole thing mystifies me, and I would be inclined to say that the young men don't take their work seriously enough. There's too much of this knocking off at six o'clock attitude. London perhaps is too distracting. In America, you see, Holly-

wood succeeds as a production centre where New York fails. As for places like Denham and Elstree, they are too near London."

These difficulties recognised, this should point more strongly to the need for the growth of a film movement in England, something as creative as the old German school and as individual as many of the French films of to-day. This is the rather diffused feeling which exists among a number of the younger film people. To bring this about a co-ordinated movement is necessary. Its practicability is submitted to Hitchcock.

"That, of course, is academic," he declares. "But I endorse such a movement. The interests in Wardour Street, however, are primarily concerned with the commercial aspects, therefore it would have to have finance. But there is always this drawback: the handling of star material and story. These are difficulties which are not present in the making of documentary films. I would like to make documentary films, because here you have slabs of action or movement which can be easily treated by photography and



**Alfred Hitchcock, one of the few British film directors to achieve approving recommendation in America, has in recent years specialised in crime stories for his films.**

**In an interview with Leslie Perkoff he here discusses problems of film-making, his interest in documentary and social films and his hopes for the future.**

**"If I do go to Hollywood, I'd only work for Selznick."**

cutting. But a cataclysm in any film, for example, is akin to documentary material. It begins with the camera and goes directly to the cutting-room."

If the handling of stars presents an obstacle to film-making, could not the star system itself be lessened in favour of actual story value and treatment of a film?

"The point about the star-system is that it enables you to exaggerate from a story point of view. And the stars do bring the audiences into the cinemas. A star's name is like a clarion call and brings in the time factor when, for instance, a film is shown and you want people to come and see it on definite days. A film without stars would have to wait to be appreciated."

A problem which has recently given grounds for strong comment is now introduced: The clash of idioms brought about by the irruption of film people into a strange country whose language even they sometimes have not mastered.

"I had an experience bringing this up when I was directing a film called *Murder* in English and German," Hitchcock says. "I could speak German, but I found it was a difference

of idiom and not of language. You've got to live twenty years in a country before you can express its idiom."

At this juncture the paradox in Hitchcock's own work is put forward; on one hand, his feeling for and treatment of real characters, and on the other hand, the fantasy, unreality and sometimes lack of social background that accompanies the treatment.

"Failing to get a good script, I've invariably descended or ascended to using my own resources and becoming a crime reporter. I've always found it difficult to get proper themes."

Certain criminal types are dealt with in his films, but has it occurred to him to give the psychological background to these types? For instance, the social and personal conflicts that make criminals of people?

"Of course, I've studied criminal types from many aspects. I've read many books on the subject, but it is a matter of the sugar-coated pill with films. I wanted to make an anti-capital punishment film where the prison governor revolts and refuses to hang his man. It's a stirring subject. But here there would be difficulties with the censor. America can send over things of this sort, because the attitude here is that America can do what she likes with social subjects in her own country. In England this has to be left alone. When I put the Sydney Street affair in the *Man Who Knew Too Much*, the censor's objection was that it wasn't the thing to show English policemen using arms. He was very decent about the matter, though. I would like to make a film showing the balance of justice in English courts. I feel that this is a subject which has not been shown to the full."

Was he going to Hollywood, and if so did he expect to have better facilities there for expressing himself?

"I've only discussed this with David Selznick so far. The matter is still in the air. But if I do go to Hollywood, I'd only work for Selznick."

And finally there is a touch of dismay in Hitchcock's attitude to the present situation of the cinema. "Cinema as an art-form doesn't really exist," he says. "So many people have brought the theatre into it. It is no longer used in a technical sense, but as a proscenium."

The impression is given of fundamental problems having been touched on, but not resolved: The conflict between England and America on the question of talent; the obstacles in the way of a creative film movement in England; the compelling aura surrounding the star-system; the dearth of cinematic story material and the lack of freedom in dealing with important subjects; and the stereotyped treatment of films, so that they are forced into the "proscenium." Somewhere else Hitchcock has inferred that the power of universal appeal and the need to cater for this has done much to destroy film art. Tacitly, then, the uncreative elements at work in the cinema are recognised.

One is safe in submitting that the public is not solely responsible for this, since the very nature of a society that demands that film be utilised as an anodyne must be considered. Apparently the film executives and the financial powers operating behind their movements, do not realise what a powerful yet sensitive medium they control, for they have so far underestimated and failed to understand the complex structure of the public they cater for. To reverse their logic, it is not always this incoherently defined public that dictates film demands, but rather they themselves.



The picture heading this article is from Hitchcock's new film "Young and Innocent" and Hitchcock himself appears in this scene. He is to the left of the doorway, holding a camera.

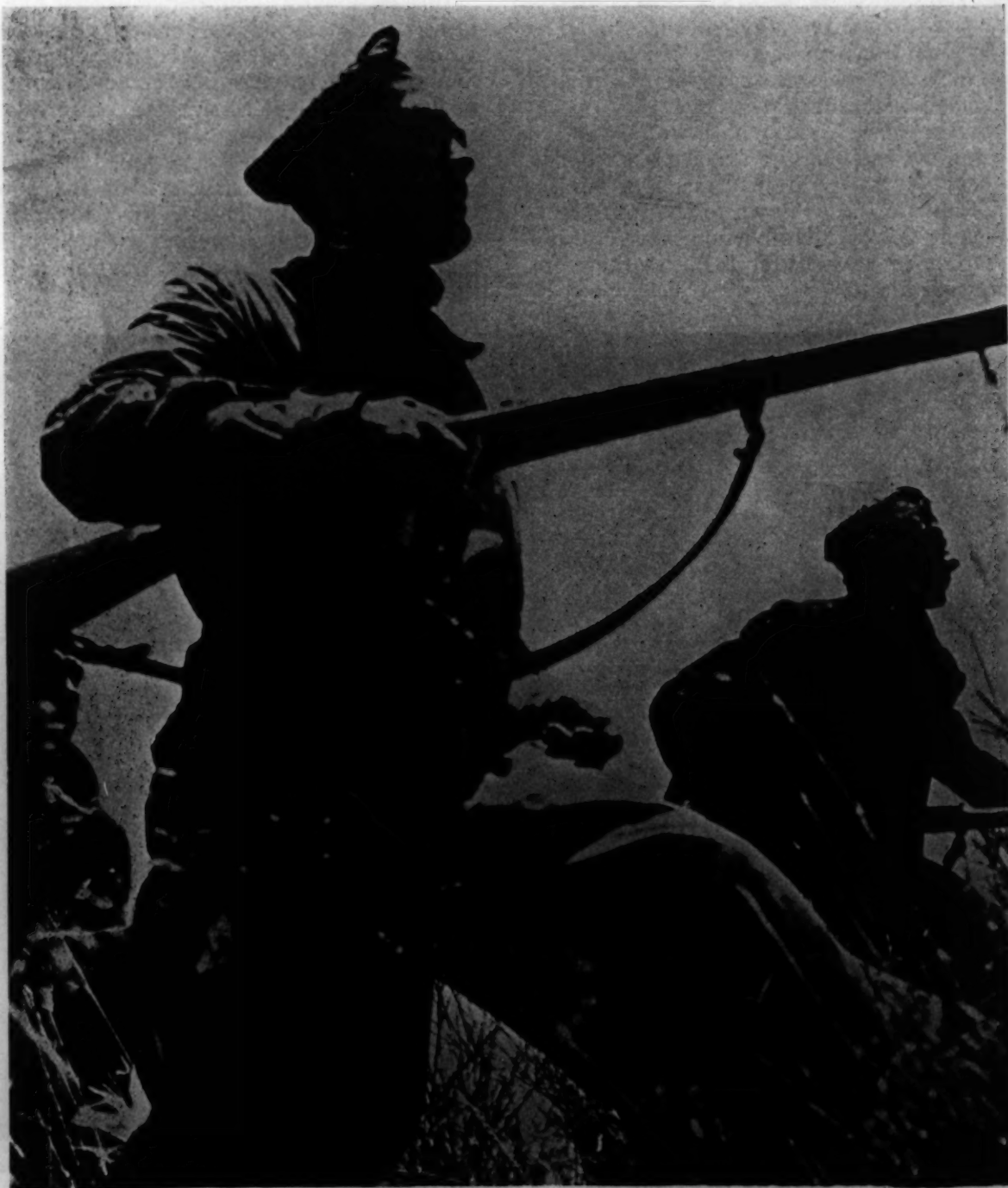
Above: a scene from "The Thirty-Nine Steps"



# NEWSREEL MAN

## in the FIRING LINE

*The adventures and misadventures of Richard Butler, Pathé Cameraman in search of newsreel pictures on the Aragon front.*



I PRODUCED my papers—showing them how much money I was bringing into the country. I was allowed to pass on. I reported to the British Consulate and was advised to get out of Spain without delay as they did not consider it safe for me to attempt to take photographs.

I got to an hotel and dumped my equipment and then sat down to partake of a Spanish breakfast, which to an English appetite fell far short of what I had hoped. I had a walk round the town. Almost everyone was in some sort of military uniform—or shall we say dress, as a Sam Browne over an ordinary suit of clothes, revolver in holster and the militia cap made a well-dressed soldier of the Red Army of Spain. Flags and banners flew from every car, private and otherwise; and every car had roughly painted on the initials of the organisation to which the owner belonged—P.O.U.M., F.A.I., C.N.T., U.G.T., P.S.U., and others too numerous to recall with ease, and there appeared, of course, the sickle and hammer painted on somewhere. Everyone appeared to be in high spirits, and by the look on people's faces one could not help acquiring confidence.

That night—and on most nights, so I was told—the streets were crowded with people listening to the loud-speakers giving forth the news, propaganda, etc., mingled with the “Internationale”. This sort of thing continues to about 1 a.m. the following morning.

The next day I started making enquiries how to get to the front. Some people to whom I spoke about this regarded me with interest; others thought I was crazy. After a lot of suggestions I concluded that to visit some of the organisations would be a good idea. I first of all visited the Commission of Propaganda; then the F.A.I. headquarters; and after receiving little satisfaction I approached the P.O.U.M. I could not get a start. Everyone seemed to want to shift the responsibility of giving me papers. However, I was finally given the first encouragement from the propaganda people, who were most helpful, giving me several addresses to which I should apply for permission to take photographs in Spain.

With these papers of recommendation I thought I was fairly safe to make a start, so engaged a car to go to Madrid. Everywhere the roads are in a bad state and desperately in need of repair. We had not gone far, and everything seemed to be going well, when we were halted by a road sentry, who drew his revolver and kept it pointing steadily in my direction, while I gave him all the papers I possessed to read. He mumbled something in Russian and then called up a comrade, and together they decided that I should about turn. The driver of the car tried his best to explain, but this only served to make the guards more excited; they were madly gesticulating, and waving their arms about in the air. That revolver did look pretty threatening, so late that night I arrived back in Barcelona feeling fed-up at having apparently wasted a day and about 200 pesetas.

But this first set-back only went to prove how important it was to have every paper that was procurable before starting off again.



The reason for these difficulties, I discovered later, was due to the fact that two Continental cameramen had taken pictures at the Government fronts and that films containing military information of an important character had found their way into Rebel hands.

The Commission of Propaganda now came to my aid in a whole-hearted manner, after I explained that I was out in Spain to obtain pictures of an impartial nature and to show the British public the Government as well as the other side to the question. So many Rebel pictures had been shown, I pointed out, but very few of the Government side.

Two days later more papers were obtained, and in one of the Commission of Propaganda cars I set off for the Aragon Front. But twenty miles out, owing, I inferred, to the excessive vibration of the car caused by the bad roads, an oil pipe burst and ran the engine out of oil. I waited with the car while the driver went on in another car to the next village, returning an hour later with the necessary oil and accessories for repairs.

During his absence I visited a farmhouse about one hundred yards off the road, and was given wine and bread by two old peasants who cried like children when the war was mentioned—their two sons were fighting somewhere on the Aragon Front. I thanked them in bad French and a little Spanish; however, they seemed to understand. It is dangerous to drink water out in the country, and so if you get too much of a thirst you must be able to carry your liquor well, or there will be two wars going on.

I arrived at Barbastro that night about forty miles away from the Front, and had to sleep in a small bed with the driver, the town being full up with troops on their way to the Front. Next morning I set off at eight a.m. for "the bloody hell", as some called it in the town billets. On the way the back axle snapped. I hired another car and so on to the Front, arriving in what was once a town, but now a mere heap of bricks. I reported to the Committee and officer in charge, and proceeded on foot to the Front-line trenches where spasmodic rifle and machine-gun fire was going on. No one took much notice except myself, but I soon became accustomed to it.

It was not long before I unpacked my camera, and started getting a few shots—some excellent scenes of sniping, etc. I spent the day here. The night before, I was informed, there had been an attack by the Moors, their front line being only 350 yards away. I was told in the trenches that priests encouraged and blessed the men before they went into an attack—giving them crosses to carry round their necks and promising them that should they be killed in battle they would go straight to Paradise. My informant told me that five to six hundred Moors had been shot down the night before, but I could not see any from the Government lines. So I decided to investigate, and, under the protection of a ditch, crawled out about eighty yards and got several shots of dead Moors—all around on every side I could see the countryside strewn with these corpses. I counted up to 500; then lost count. I did not see any "Spanish Rebel" corpses on this part,

only Moors. Every now and then the dust would be raised by a rifle bullet, and I was glad of the cover afforded by the ditch I was crawling in. I slept that night in a place that was once a house—straw on the floor and huge holes in the roof and walls.

Next day I visited another battery behind Tardienta and took several "shots" of the troops. They all seemed cheery souls, and the camera caused quite an amount of interest. During the time I was there, an unexpected flank attack was commenced by a small body of Rebels, which was soon repulsed by the men of the battery with rifle fire. Often the Rebels broke through the line at some weak spot and got lost and endeavoured to fight their way back to their own lines. After one has seen the country, this is quite easily understood.

**I** TRAVELLED the following day to Septimo, miles further up the line, and reported to the Committee and officer in charge. My food supplies were limited, so I sent the driver back to get more stock. He took the best part of a day to get some tinned provisions and bread, having to go about thirty to forty miles inland for it. I slept that night in a room with about a dozen soldiers on straw, all of them in high spirits and very merry and bright. My cameras caused much interest, and everybody wanted his photograph taken. Up at dawn, I was glad to get out away from the straw, which I am sure, from my discomfort and the state of my underclothes, was lousy. I took some "shots" in Septimo all in ruins, and got permission to go to Huesca Front line, some 2,000 yards away. The driver

arrived at a part of the road where sandbag barricades were to be seen all around.

Here was a good picture, so I started getting the cameras out of the case when there came a voice in good English, "Get down, you bloody fool! Get back!" The driver backed the car and I took the advice received.

I met an Englishman commanding one of the Government batteries. He explained that we were right in the front line, and where the driver had stopped the car was a spot well covered by about four or five Rebel machine-guns; fortunately no shots were fired and we proceeded with more caution. I went into the trenches with the Englishman and got some more photographs, and it was here I was amused at the following incident. Rebel trenches were only fifty yards away, and Government men and the Rebels would shout across to each other insults of every kind. As they were in Spanish I cannot repeat them, but I could use my imagination.

Going to the battery just behind the front line, which is well covered by a thickly-wooded stream, I sat down by one of the gun pits and had a chat. A couple of bullets cut off a twig and some leaves hardly a yard off, so I shifted to a safer spot in the gun pit. No photographs are allowed to be taken of the guns or the activities of the gunners. Returning to Septimo, I had some grub and came back that evening to the front line to talk with the Englishman, who gave me some photographs. I drank Spanish wine till I thought I had better get back while I could.

Next day I visited front line kitchens and the War Hospital at Tiers, a little village  
(continued on next page)



*Government troops go into action.*

(Pathé Newsreel)



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(Continued from previous page)

about five hundred yards behind the line. My companion and myself had to take cover from 'planes on several occasions. They were very active and would circle overhead menacingly and keep flying round as though to depart, but would reappear when least expected.

I got good shots of a Government attack through a rifle firing hole. They ran into a machine gun and got cut up badly; the pictures show them falling and retiring in rather bad disorder. The shortage of arms and ammunition was certainly evident. Visiting Tiers again, I took some shots of the Rebel lines through a tele lens, but had them cut out by a censor as they showed the Government position in relation to the Rebel lines. I returned to Septimo for a night and had a sing-song with the Government soldiers; they certainly could sing, a quartet putting on a Mills Brothers act to perfection.

I was off at dawn to a heavy battery position. They were giving me a position to the right of Huesca. I took two hundred feet of film going; then I moved to a new and more comfortable position and made several shots of shells bursting on Rebel positions. After a few hours I returned to Huesca Front line, and had lunch with the P.O.U.M. I got some good shots and during lunch several rifle bullets hit the top of the wall in the room—or what was once a room. It had no roof, but we were covered by a wall in front of us, and were some six feet or more out of the line of fire. Under the conditions, I didn't enjoy my lunch as well as I could have done. Nobody else took any notice, so I endeavoured to disregard the firing, but was nevertheless glad when lunch was over.

Next day I left for Siriema and discovered before I had journeyed many miles that it was necessary to buy a new tyre for the car; it was not exactly "new", but better than the one that had cut up badly on the rough roads. Arriving at Siriema, I reported at the Air Field for permission to take pictures of the British Red Cross and Air Field—the general here commands the whole of the Aragon Front—but my papers were not good enough for him and he graciously had the driver and myself put under arrest and shoved into prison. Although we did not possess firearms, we had an armed guard with us all the time. My cameras and films were all taken and things looked pretty black. I spoke all the



War!

(Pathé Newsreel)



Richard Butler

French and Spanish I knew, but of no avail.

**H**OWEVER, that night we were removed to a house and given a bed to sleep in. There were literally thousands of bugs; it was a most vile and filthy place. The bed was damp and I was indeed grateful to see the dull grey light of morning, after lying awake through the night.

I was still finding it difficult to get someone to understand the English language. At last I was understood in French, and was told that the police had telephoned Barcelona. This sounded better. Our guard was glad of a drink, so I let him have what he wanted—he soon became quite jolly and obliging, and I eventually managed to get to the police headquarters. Here I 'phoned Barcelona myself, and found out that papers were on their way from the Commission of Propaganda.

That night I left for Barcelona, managing after difficulty and much signing of papers to regain possession of my cameras, but the films had gone to the aviation field. I found out later that they would be developed in Madrid, censored and returned to Propaganda, and as no one seemed to be in any hurry at all I became almost desperate trying to hurry things up and get hold of the films.

Just before leaving for England I learned that the films in question would be shown to the various censor committees, who, if they considered it prudent to release the films, would instruct the Commission of Propaganda to have them dispatched via express transport to Paris.

The censoring problem is the biggest "headache" of all. During the Abyssinian War, one Committee was sufficient to enable one's films to be either rejected or released, but six or seven and even more censoring organisations have to be considered before Spanish war films can leave that country without further interference.

So ended nine days packed full of adventure, interest and, I must also say, some of the most pleasant moments with some very fine types of men—confident, happy, but terribly handicapped by the shortage of arms and ammunition.





# My GRANDMOTHER has never met WALT DISNEY

MY grandmother and Walt Disney have never met face to face. Which is a pity, for the old lady has always been one of his warmest admirers and one of his keenest critics.

Despite the fact that she long ago decided against the aspidistra as an outward symbol of respectability, and regretfully replaced the venetian blinds with casement curtains, she often does find it difficult to adjust her ideas to the rapidly changing standards of the nineteen-thirties. Being born in 1850 is rather a handicap at times.

The fashionable foible of studied discourtesy annoys her exceedingly, and she laments because the modern manner of bringing up children establishes a code of conduct which makes it unlikely the old-world niceties of behaviour will be revived in the near future.

While she accepts a glass of sherry as a lady's right she does not hold with cocktails, or with feminine smokers.

It is just as well to know how deep-rooted are some of her prejudices.

Yet she does accept with tolerance many of the changes brought about by alternating Victorian, Edwardian, Georgian and neo-Georgian rules of conduct.

In her time she has ridden a horse and in horsed carriages, cycled, welcomed the motor-car, and got as far as, at least, hankering after a journey by aeroplane.

Literary experiences range from "John Halifax, Gentleman", everything Charles Garvice ever wrote, and most of Anthony Trollope, to "All Quiet on the Western Front", and such American classics as "Little Women" and "The Postman always rings twice". We have not yet experimented with a Thorne Smith fantasy.

Needless to say the radio delights her, especially when a hot-rhythm is being broadcast. She is thankful to have seen the cinema reach something like maturity, and

considers the talkies a great improvement on the silent films.

What I am leading up to, after giving a brief word-picture of the attitude of an elderly lady whose wonderful laugh sets quivering like an upholstered jelly some sixteen stone of lovable humanity, is that my grandmother had nothing to do with the respectabilification of Walt Disney.

I insist on that word, by the way. If it isn't in the dictionary it ought to be, placed there by the Women's Clubs of America who got into a communal state of het-upedness over the Silly Symphonies and insisted that in future Mickey Mouse must be very, very good, lest his mischievous pranks lead to imitative amorality in a land which has been made fit for such stalwart citizens as Al Capone and the late lamented Mr. Dillinger.

When Mr. Disney first wedded animated cartoon to appropriate sound accompaniment he had a genius for the childlike vulgarity which most of us learn to express in the nursery by the surreptitious recitation of traditional parodies on "The boy stood on the burning deck" and "The Workhouse Master".

To the inventor of the Silly Symphony it was beautiful and logical that his anthropomorphic creations should be vested with all reasonable human characteristics.

My grandmother never complained when a Disney lion, appreciating the elastic possibilities of a suddenly distended belly, tossed his navel high in the air, caught it dexterously in his mouth as it descended, and, with a chop-licking swallow, re-embellished the smooth expanse of front with a perfectly natural mark of punctuation.

My grandmother never accused Disney of having an umbilical complex. She didn't care a button for such things—never blushed at a naked tree nor wriggled uncomfortably at a contentedly uddered cow which, quite

understandably, found red flannel drawers irksome.

As for Mickey she expected him to get up to all sorts of pranks.

No, it was the Women's Clubs of America who cleaned up the Silly Symphonies and forced the creation of Donald Duck to be the scapegoat of the cartoon world. No bad thing, this, until Donald himself began to quieten down in a most disheartening manner.

Sadie and Mamie, from the Middle West, keep butting in. They have made it virtually impossible for Minnie to appear with Mickey lest it suggest sex complications.

Thousands of well-meaning old dears have got together to become the new daughters of a moral revolution.

I sometimes picture them in solemn conclave, or staging one of those terribly bannered processions for which America is famous. And then giving battle to win the greatest navel victory of all time.

But nowhere among them do I discern the like of my grandmother.

The aspidistras have gone Middle West, the venetian blinds have been exported to Nashville, and we are packing up Trollope for presentation to the cloistered denizens of Sorghum City.

Disney has been tamed, and the draperies of the Statue of Liberty are drawn more tightly about her virgin frame.

And all grandmamma can say is "I don't think Mr. Disney's cartoons are quite so amusing as they were when I was younger". The only, er, deep laugh she's given lately was for the somnolent stork introduced into "Clock Cleaners". Have Sadie and Mamie seen the unfeathered posterior of that fantastic fowl?

Maybe they'd like to ask *their* grandmothers about it!

Leslie Cargill



# MARCH of TIME on the AIR



Mr. C. W. Van Voorhis—The Voice of Time

**T**HERE is a steady chatter in the bar. Groups of two and three stand around. There is a chink of glass, muttered jests and the sound of laughter. On the end of the bar stands a radio; it softly pours out an innocuous background of sweet music. It is after ten o'clock. The oldsters who have been there all night are now finding seats in the odd corners and the youngsters just in from the first house of the films are taking their place at the bar. Someone turns up the volume control of the radio and a flood of music fills the bar. A cocktail is shaken in rhythm; a man taps a glass in time; a girl sways to the music.

The announcer's voice booms from the

radio—"The March of Time". A girl attempts to get another station but a young man anticipates her so the announcer continues:

"This week in New London, Texas, roustabouts and derrick-men, workers in Rusk County's rich oil fields, line the ominously quiet main street, gather in groups outside tenantless store buildings which have been turned into morgues, escort quietly, sobbing women from one to another stop in the rounds they must make to claim their dead."

A hush has trembled along the length of the bar. The girl has stepped back from the radio. An old man has set down his glass of beer. He is polishing his spectacles. The bartender has poised in the polishing of a glass.

The announcer continues:

"And all day long through a hardware store, past the line of lifeless bodies stretched out on the floor—bodies of grade-school children, high-school boys and girls—bodies bruised and dismembered—

CHARLIE

I don't think he's here, Fed.

BRIGGS

I'll just look if you don't mind.

CHARLIE

Be as quiet as you can.

BRIGGS

Sure . . . sure . . . (Pause) This is Billy Childreth. Somebody ought to tell his ma. . .



One of America's most popular radio features is *The March of Time's* broadcast. Adapting to the radio the technique so successful on the screen, its sponsors broadcast a weekly reenactment of memorable scenes from the news of the world.

In describing this feature, Thomas Baird gives extracts from three episodes—the gas explosion at a school in New London, Texas, which killed 455 children, an account of the British Royal Families' visit to the British Industries Fair, and the taking of Malaga by Franco's army.

CHARLIE  
Mrs. Childreth was here, just a little while ago. *(Music)*

ANNOUNCER  
Billy Childreth. Three fifteen o'clock in the manual training room of the New London's rural school.

TEACHER  
You better tighten up that plane, Billy, if you expect a smooth surface on your table.

BILLY  
Yes, Miss, I will.

TEACHER  
Billy! Be careful. Turn off that motor. You'll take your fingers off adjusting that blade with the plane going.

BILLY  
Say, Miss Butler, I finished my footstool, can I take it home tonight?

TEACHER  
I'd give it another coat of varnish if I were you. Wait until to morrow.

*(Music up and down)*

ANNOUNCER  
Through New London's hardware store, past the rows of blanket-covered figures on the floor, past the glittering shelves and show cases, all day, all night, the slow line moves; seeking their dead, a grimy oil worker, a young woman, a man and his wife:

JANE  
Did you . . . find him, Joe?

DAVIDSON  
You better come home with me now, Jane.

JANE  
Joe . . . tell me.

DAVIDSON  
Yes, I found him. *(Music sneak)* You better come home now, Jane.

ANNOUNCER  
Five-year-old Joe Davidson, standing in the door of a classroom of the New London School.

JOE  
Miss Arnold . . .

MISS A.  
Yes . . .

JOE  
Miss Arnold . . . My mother's gone to Overton . . .

MISS A.  
Quiet. What is it, Joe?

JOE  
She wanted me to ask you if I could stay here with my sister until school is out.

MISS A.  
Of course you can, Joe. Just go right back and sit down with her.

JOE  
Yes, ma'am.

MISS A.  
I want to see everyone studying tomorrow's lesson. *(Music swells)* There's nothing to laugh about.

*(Music up and down)*

ANNOUNCER  
*(Faint dry sobbing)* A woman is kneeling on the floor. A greyhaired man stands beside her.

MAN  
Are you sure?

WOMAN  
Anna . . . it's Anna . . . I know . . . it's Anna.

MAN  
All right . . . all right . . .

WOMAN  
Anna . . . Anna . . . Anna . . . *(Music)*

ANNOUNCER  
Anna Misteard, the domestic room: 31: 5 o'clock:  
*(Dishes in water and low chatter of girls)*

TEACHER  
Girls! Girls! Some of you haven't finished washing the dishes and the bell's going to ring any minute now.

ANNA  
May I take my cake up to Miss Walker?

TEACHER  
After school, Anna, you haven't copied the recipe for tomorrow yet.

*(Music up and down)*

MRS. BARTON  
Aren't there any more here, maybe in the back room . . .

MAN  
No, ma'am, she might be at the feed store . . . they've taken some there.

MRS. BARTON  
I've been there.

MAN  
The church?

MRS. BARTON  
No . . . no place, no place.

MAN  
Ohh.

MRS. BARTON  
Charlie . . . if you see a piece of cloth like this . . . blue and white checked . . . over to the school . . . will you call 'em? Lillian was wearing a blue and white checked dress.

*(Music)*

ANNOUNCER  
But this week of 1937, death has claimed 455 children in the worst school disaster in U.S. history—the demolition of the New London Consolidated School, biggest and richest rural school in the world, in the heart of the Southwest's rich oil country, by an explosion of natural gas, reported by a military inquiry at week's end as due to cause or causes unknown—an act of God. TIME MARCHES ON!"

A middle-aged man quickly steps up to the bar: "Scotch." Then to a young man at the side he says: "Gotta coupla kids at school myself." The girl turns to the radio now with: "For God's sake give us some jazz." The old man's glass of beer is still on the table. He is polishing his spectacles. He hardly notices the burst of music which floods the shadows of the bar.

THE broadcasting studio is littered with scripts and gadgets. Sound effect machines stand in a forest of microphones. Five men sit in a corner playing cards. Two women are knitting. Rows of extras rustle their scripts and pencil-mark their lines. The producer is already behind his glass panel, and has his eye on the creeping hands of the large clock. At 10.25 he signals "stand-by" to his cast. The five men jump to their feet. Dollar bills are stuffed into their pockets and the cards are gathered up. The half-finished knitting is thrust into paper bags. The extras clear their throats. Then all is still. The second hand ticks round the face of the clock. As it covers the figure twelve the announcer, head back and hand on cheek, shouts: "The March of Time".



## Continuing 'March of Time on the Air'



In the huge British Industries Fair at London's suburb of Olympia, one day this week, decked with flags, crowded with buyers and sightseers; a young man, derby tipped on the back of his head, stands at the cutlery counter beside his wife.

FULLER

Now this piece here, Mae, would you say—

MAE

(Half whisper) Fred . . . look who's coming our way.

FULLER

Mae, please, we've got to finish up this buying.

MAE

Fred . . . right here. It's the King of England . . . King George.

FULLER (awed)

Why, it is him.

MAE

And Queen Elizabeth . . . and there's Queen Mary. Oh, Fred, they're going to go right past us.

FULLER

Gee . . . what're we supposed to do?

MAE

Take off your hat.

FULLER

Should I?

MAE

Of course. Take it off! And don't gawk . . . pretend as though we're looking at stuff.

QUEEN

I must stop here a moment.

MAE (Whisper)

Fred! Bow to her.

QUEEN

Clever things here . . . a red, white and blue knife . . . Oh, ah, can you tell me how much this knife is?

FULLER

I don't exactly know . . . ah . . . your Highness. I'm a buyer, not a seller.

QUEEN

Oh—oh, yes, surely. You're a visitor . . . an American?

FULLER

Yeah—ah, yes, I am . . . I'm from Brooklyn—name's Fuller, Fred Fuller.

QUEEN

How do you do.

FULLER

Oh, your Highness—ah—Majesty, let me present, ah . . . this is my wife, Mrs. Fuller.

QUEEN

How do you do, Mrs. Fuller, this is very nice to meet an American business man at our fair. And this is the king. Mr. and Mrs. Fuller from Brooklyn in America.

KING

How do you do.

QUEEN

And the Queen . . .

FULLER

Unh . . . your majesty . . . unh . . .

QUEEN

And the Duchess of Kent . . .

DUCHESS

How do you do, Mr. Fuller.

FULLER

How do.

QUEEN

And the Duke of Kent.

FULLER

Unh . . .

KENT

Being an American business man, Mr. Fuller, you can tell us how business really goes there now.

FULLER

Why, it's swell . . . Duke . . . your Majesty—ah—it's swell.

KENT

Splendid.

KING

If we're going to lunch, Mother . . .

QUEEN

Yes, George. Goodbye, Mrs. Fuller. Goodbye, Mr. Fuller. I trust your trip here has been successful.

FULLER

Oh, yes . . . yes . . . it's been swell. Goodbye, your Highness (Feet and Murmur) Mae—!?

MAE

Fred . . .

FULLER

How do you s'pose that happened—?

MAE

I don't know.

FULLER

She thought I was a salesman.

MAE

Yeah—maybe 'cause you had your hat off.

FULLER

And you . . . you didn't say a word . . . you just stood there.

MAE (half sob)

I couldn't, Fred . . . meeting them all like that . . . the whole royal family . . . Oh, Fred, let's sit down somewhere.

(Music)

FULLER

That royal family is all right . . . real folks . . . just like us. Queen Mary's nice as you'd ever hope to meet . . . and the Duke of Kent is a keen man. But the one that really took my eye was Marina, the Duchess of Kent . . . I tell you, she's beautiful! King George . . . well, I didn't get to know him . . . he didn't have much to say, except he wanted to eat.

1937 MARCHES ON!

THE five men return to their corners, quietly resume their regal game of nap; the women resume their knitting. Another group of actors have taken their place at the microphone.

(Distant Rumble of Artillery)

ANNOUNCER

Malaga—a seaport on the Mediterranean coast of Spain. For a full week the city has been under siege, surrounded on three sides by the Moorish and Italian troops of Rebel General Francisco Franco. It is late on the night of the seventh day. (Tap Tap) In a bare room in the working-class district (Tap Tap).

NITA

What is that? Mother! Listen! (Tap Tap)

1ST WOMAN

Sh, Nita, shh.

NITA

Who is it?

1ST WOMAN

I don't know. Wait—(Bolt drawn, door opens) Alvaro!

ALVARO

There is no time . . . listen, you must get away, you and the baby, tonight, now.



1ST WOMAN  
Have they taken the city?  
ALVARO  
They will by morning. We couldn't hold them any longer . . . the Italians . . . take what food you can, whatever you can carry, and go out by the east road.

1ST WOMAN  
Do we have to go? Couldn't we . . . ?  
ALVARO  
They shot four thousand civilians when they took Badajoz. You've got to go, now.

1ST WOMAN  
But where?  
ALVARO  
To Almeria. It is the only road that is open. I've got to tell the others and then go back.

1ST WOMAN

Alvaro!

ALVARO

Goodbye, Maria.

NITA

Goodbye, Daddy . . . goodbye.

ALVARO

Goodbye, baby. (Music) Goodbye—(Music)

ANNOUNCER

In the faint light of early morning, one hundred and fifty thousand men, women and children trudge out along the one road running eastward; sturdy peasant women from the vineyards of Vélez, old fishermen from Almunécar, workmen and their families from the city, fleeing before the Moors, the Germans, the Italians of Rebel General Francisco Franco.

Ahead are the little coastal villages, Almogia, Torrox, Narja; and the hope of safety at Almeria, one hundred miles away. From early morning, all day long they plod slowly eastward, choking the road, their straggling line of march stretching for miles; (Plane high up) all day, all night, on into the second day.

(Dull Explosions)

BOY

Are they dropping bombs on the people, Mother?

MOTHER

I don't know. (Dull Explosion) Holy Mother, pray for us. Blessed Jesus, have mercy on us. (Explosion) (Plane going away)

BOY

Mother—Mother—

MOTHER

Come, Carlo, come. We've got to go on.

BOY

Mother, look, back where the bomb landed on the road.

MOTHER

Don't, Carlo, don't look back there. Come now, (Music) we've got to go on. (Music)

ANNOUNCER

The march of the hundred and fifty thousand. Daily from the west come rebel planes; a leisurely barrage of shells from rebel warships on the coast.

The third day; the fourth; there is no food. Water along the way has been fouled by men and animals. Dysentery is beginning. The sick, the wounded, the starved, stumble often on the white flint road. Those who cannot go on wait patiently to die. The fourth night comes; the fifth day; a woman with a baby wrapped in a dirty shawl is hurrying unsteadily up the line of march.

WOMAN  
(Dull, Exhausted) Senora, senora, is there a priest? Is there a priest anywhere? (Baby Cry)

2ND WOMAN

A priest? I do not know.

WOMAN

For my baby. He was born yesterday, by the road. The priest to baptise him . . .

MAN

There is a town ahead . . . a few miles.

WOMAN

No. The baby is sick. He will not live.

MAN

Maybe there is a priest, perhaps further on . . .

(Music)

ANNOUNCER

The march of the hundred and fifty thousand. Late on the fifth day; the first refugees finally reach the little seaport of Almeria. Evening; thousands are already huddled in the streets and in the Plaza of Almeria, because there is nowhere else to sleep.

A line of children is standing outside an emergency food depot.

NURSE

(Plane, very distant) Here you are . . . one for each child . . . step right up here, sonny.

3RD CHILD

Thank you, senora.

NURSE

Hold the cup in both hands.

4TH CHILD

Senora, I have a little brother—I couldn't carry him here—but could I have—

NURSE

Of course. Of course you can.

4TH CHILD

He is too little to eat bread.

NURSE

You take this milk for him.

4TH CHILD

It is so good to be here at last in Almeria.

NURSE

Yes, I know. Right up here, little girl—

3RD CHILD

Listen . . .

4TH CHILD  
Airplanes? (Distant Siren, Planes very high up).

NURSE

Children, lie down, lie down flat in the street, all of you. (Explosion, Screams, Explosions, Wiped out with Music).

ANNOUNCER

In the year one forty-six B.C. the refugees of Carthage fled inland along the African coast to Alexandria before their doomed city was destroyed by Scipio. In the year seventy, two hundred thousand Jews fled from Jerusalem across the Jordan before the Legions of the Roman Titus. In the year twelve forty, Genghis Khan laid siege to Cracov, and a hundred thousand Poles fled westward into Saxony. In 1914, two hundred thousand Belgians left Antwerp and crossed safely into Holland. And this week for future history is told the flight from Malaga; the March of the One Hundred and Fifty Thousand; historic because it is one of the great mass evacuations of all time; because it is the first in history under conditions of modern warfare, the first to be attacked by modern long-range bombing planes even after the refugees have arrived at their destination. This week comments Canadian Dr. Norman Bethune, Chief of the Spanish-American Blood Transfusion Institute, stationed at Almeria:

DOCTOR

One hundred and fifty thousand people—including five thousand children less than ten years old, many without parents or relatives—setting out for safety to a town one hundred miles away; on foot; bombed throughout the journey from the sea and from the air. After the air raid on Almeria, I picked up three children who had been standing in line with the others waiting for food. All three were dead. The flight from Malaga will go down in history as the most terrible mass evacuation of any city in modern times.

TIME MARCHES ON!



Above: 'March of Time' Microphone faces. Opposite page: left, Director William Spier in the control room; Right, Agnes Moorehead and Patricia Peardon playing 'Queen Elizabeth and the Princess.'





# MAGICIAN

of the

# MOVIES

The life and death of  
the great Georges Méliès  
—pioneer of trick photo-  
graphy—described by  
Stuart Legg

ON December 28th, 1895 the Lumière brothers hired the basement of a Paris café from a doubting management, set up their projector, and invited the patrons upstairs to step down and see the show. Thirty-five people paid their francs, trooped downstairs, and became the world's first movie audience. What they saw is now a matter of history; workers leaving a factory, a train arriving at a station (several fainted as the engine approached the camera) and a comedy called *L'Arroseur arrosé*. There was also a film of a bathing belle. "The sea in this picture", wrote an enthusiastic journalist, "is a veritable marvel, so true to life, so wide, so vivid, so moving". When the audience left at the end of the show one man remained behind. He was Georges Méliès.

Méliès was 34. He came of a wealthy Paris family. He was a jack-of-all-trades, endowed with a vivid imagination and a love of making things with his hands. In his early twenties his manual skill had made him in turn factory worker, mechanic, cabinet-maker and designer. Later he took to painting and caricature. But his principal passion was conjuring. At the age of 26 he bought the Théâtre Robert-Houdin in the Passage de l'Opéra. Here he sought to revive the mid-nineteenth century pantomime tradition of Debureau in his own terms. He staged "des spectacles" such as "La Guirlande Magique" and "Le Tableau de Fantaisie" in which illusion of every kind, including his own conjuring, was the principal attraction. He became producer, actor, scene painter. He built sets out of old bits of three-ply

and property swords out of soap-boxes with a rapidity that astonished his colleagues. He rigged up electric circuits for special effects. "I was an intellectual worker and a manual worker at the same time", he said.

Small wonder then that when he saw his first films Méliès should remain behind when everyone else had gone. Here was a new medium for spectacles, a new way of making magic. "I marvelled at it", he declared. Somehow or other he must get hold of the means of making films. "I went up to Lumière and tried to make him sell me his invention. I offered him ten thousand francs, twenty thousand, fifty thousand. I was prepared to offer him my whole fortune, my house, my family possessions." But Lumière would not listen. He said: "Young man, my invention is not for sale, and in any case it would only ruin you. Perhaps for a time it may be exploited as a scientific curiosity, but apart from that it has no commercial future whatever".

This refusal did not count for much with Méliès. The rainy, wobbling films had given him the thrill of his life and he was determined, Lumière or no Lumière, to make films himself. If he could not buy someone else's equipment, then he would make his own. He had designed intricate machines for his theatre and he was a skilled mechanic. Given money, the problems were not insuperable. He came to London and bought film from Paul, the pioneer English producer.

His camera finished, Méliès roamed about shooting anything that interested him. He shot regiments on the march, traffic in the

streets, trains arriving and leaving. Then he bethought him of the acts at his own theatre. One of these was a disappearing woman. It was an act of which Méliès was proud; it drew large audiences, and professionals had failed to discover how it was done. He filmed it under the title of *Escamotage d'une Femme chez Robert-Houdin*. But the film was not a success. "Evidently," said Méliès, "the whole thing appeared childish on the screen. The audience could only see a lot of smoke and flames. They did not get the idea."

Then, in 1896, occurred the celebrated incident which showed Méliès the first secret of trick photography. He was shooting in the Paris streets, using a tripod camera. While he was turning, his camera jammed and stopped. He cleared the jam and continued shooting. When the shot appeared on the screen a bus, which was in the centre of the viewfinder at the moment of the jam, suddenly turned into a hearse. This was the clue that Méliès had been subconsciously looking for. He realised that the cinema did not require magic thrust upon it as in *Escamotage d'une Femme*. It could make magic of its own accord. Three days later he began his first trick film.

Within a short period he had discovered many of the effects we know to-day. In *Le Manoir du Diable*, *Le Cauchemar*, *Le Cabinet de Méphistophélès*, *La Vie de Jeanne D'Arc* and other films made before the turn of the century he used fast and slow motion, superimposition, one-turn-one-picture photography and fades. In *Orchestre*



he made multiple exposures and acted with himself in the same shot. In another film he caused a lump of clay to shape itself into a statue by reversed shooting. His work became the envy of his rivals: but Méliès kept his secrets well, and for several years no one could guess how his tricks were done.

Until 1897 interior shooting was unheard of. Film was slow and apertures comparatively small. But in that year the singer Paulus came to Méliès and asked to be filmed in one of his operatic parts. Méliès agreed, but at the last minute Paulus refused to undergo the ordeal of appearing in the open air in costume and make-up. Méliès collected as much artificial light as he could, painted a backcloth, placed Paulus against it, and for the first time in movie history shot a film indoors. A few months later he built himself a studio at Montreuil, "a cross," as he said "between a photographer's studio and a theatre stage." It was about thirty yards long and twelve across. At the stage end were a multitude of trap-doors, concealed holes and movable panels designed to facilitate the sudden appearances and vanishings of his actors. There were capstans, winches and pulleys to enable the principals to descend from the skies, to float on air and to rise again. The roof was of glass, and though in 1898 he installed electric lamps, Méliès was mainly dependent upon the sun for his lighting. "You have to work fast," he said, "for if you lose time you lose the sun, and then good-bye to shooting."

The studio gave Méliès new opportunities. He was able to combine trick photography and cutting with his own feats of conjuring. His films grew longer, faster in tempo and more complex in action. His output increased until, by 1900, he was making a film a week in addition to three 'superproductions' of 1,500 feet each—*Cendrillon*, *Petit Chaperon Rouge* and *Barbe Bleu*. A staff of nearly 50 girls was employed in making coloured versions of every film.

"Film-making," he wrote, "offers such a variety of pursuits, demands such a quantity of work of all kinds and claims so sustained an attention that I did not hesitate to proclaim it the most attractive and fascinating of all the arts. The film director uses a bit of everything: dramatics, design, painting, sculpture, architecture, mechanics, manual labour; all are employed in equal doses in this extraordinary profession." Considering that one of the minor production difficulties of the time was the fact that the day's rushes had to be cut into six-foot strips and developed separately, Méliès's statements about sustained attention cannot be regarded as an exaggeration.

FROM a combination of conjuring and trick photography it was a short step for Méliès to fantastic narrative. Between 1902 and 1906 he produced (among many others) four story films—*Voyage dans la Lune*, *Voyage à Travers l'Impossible*, *Quatre Cents Coups du Diable*, and *Le Raid Paris-Monte Carlo in Cinque Heures*—which are generally considered to be his greatest work. In these films reality was banished. It was replaced by a fairy world in which incredible machines, commonplace objects and strange people changed places with increasing ac-

celeration in a whirl of superb colour and movement. In *Quatre Cents Coups du Diable* clocks vomited demons, people stalked about the ceiling, the Aurora and the Great Bear met in mortal combat, Saturn leapt from his rings, women burst forth from a juggler's umbrella. Méliès was a poet as well as a magician.

He was also, on occasion, a realist. He staged several dramatic reconstructions of contemporary events, and thus anticipated the March of Time by some twenty-five years. Best known of these were *L'Affaire Dreyfus* and *La Couronnement du Roi Edouard VII*. In the latter the king was played by a wine merchant from the Place d'Italie. Edward VII saw the film during a visit to Paris and is reported to have been highly gratified.

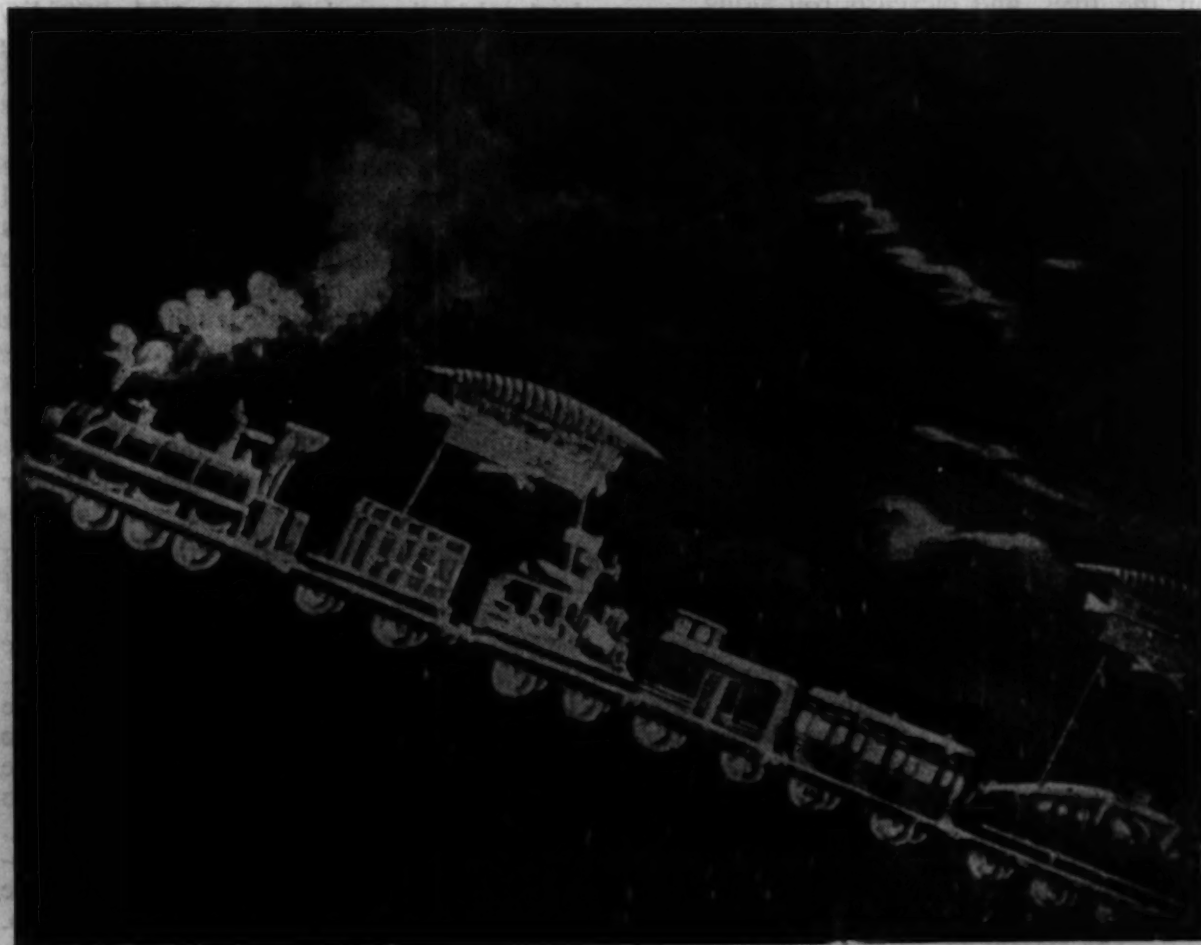
IT was between 1908 and 1910 that Méliès's troubles began. In the early days it had been the custom for producers to sell copies of their films outright to the exhibitors. But as time went on Gaumont, Pathé and other powerful French organisations took to renting instead. Méliès did not follow suit. He spent money liberally (*Voyage dans la Lune* cost some £1,500) and he wanted a quick return to ensure continuity of production. But with the more convenient system of hiring at their disposal, exhibitors would no longer buy. Competition increased as a result of the American production boom of 1908. Rival French firms discovered Méliès's secrets and imitated them. Gradually his clientèle fell away.

For some years he continued producing. In 1912 came *La Conquête du Pole*, with Father Pole, bearded and terrible, devouring

a party of explorers. During the War he made fairy stories for children; *La Fée Libellule*, *Le Lac Enchanté*, *La Bonne Bergère* et *La Mauvaise Princesse* and others. But the star system was rising; the entertainment demands of war were not attuned to fairy tales; the cinema was settling into mass production and the forms of familiar convention.

In 1914 the offices of Méliès's company were commandeered by the military. An almost complete set of copies of his films, covering twenty years of his work, were on the premises. But to move them, to rent a new office and equip new vaults would have cost more than Méliès could now afford. He sold his films to a junk merchant who resold them as industrial celluloid.

For many years Méliès was no more seen. In 1928 someone recognised him in the streets of Paris. He was selling newspapers. His friends got up a subscription to buy him a tobacco kiosk near the Gare St. Lazare. When he became too old to sell cigarettes and sweets the *Chambre Syndicale Française du Cinématographe*, which he founded in 1897 and of which he was president for ten years, arranged for him to live in the *Maison de Retraite d'Orly*, a home for destitute actors. "I have been in retirement here for three years," he wrote in 1936 to an English director. "Being the dean of cinematographers (the first one after Lumière) I am an old man, 75 years old; and since I want to stay on earth as long as possible I have to take precautions." On January 22nd, 1938, he died of cancer. He had no money, and the expenses of his funeral were defrayed by French and English film workers.



Top left: Original drawing by Georges Méliès for "Voyage dans la Lune."  
Above: The journey through space, from "Voyage à Travers l'impossible."





# “YOU DON’T Believe Your EYES”

Astounded, incredulous, Maxim Gorki reviewed the first public exhibition of moving pictures held in Paris in 1896

I AM afraid I am an undependable correspondent—without finishing the description of the factory department, I am writing about the cinematograph. But possibly I will be excused for wanting to give you my fresh impressions.

The cinematograph is a moving photograph. A beam of electric light is projected on a large screen, mounted in a dark room. And a photograph appears on the cloth screen, about two and a half yards long and a yard and a half high. We see a street in Paris. The picture shows carriages, children, pedestrians, frozen into immobility, trees covered with leaves. All of these are still. The general background is the gray tone of an engraving; all objects and figures seem to be 1/10th of their natural size.

And suddenly there is a sound somewhere, the picture shivers, you don’t believe your own eyes.

The carriages are moving straight at you, the pedestrians are walking, children are playing with a dog, the leaves are fluttering on the trees, and bicyclists roll along . . . and all this, coming from somewhere in the perspective of the picture, moves swiftly along, approaching the edge of the screen, and vanishes beyond it. It appears from outside the screen, moves to the background, grows smaller, and vanishes around the corner of the building, behind the line of carriages . . . In front of you a strange life is stirring, the real, living, feverish life of a main street of France, life which speeds past between two lines of many-storied buildings, like the Terek at Daryal, and nevertheless it is tiny, gray, monotonous, inexpressibly strange.

And suddenly it disappears. Your eyes see a plain piece of white cloth in a wide black frame, and it seems as if nothing had been there. You feel that you have imagined something that you had just seen with your own eyes—and that’s all. You feel indefinitely awestruck.

And again another picture. A gardener is watering flowers. The stream of water issuing from the hose falls upon the leaves of the trees, on flowerbeds, on the grass, the flowerpots, and the leaves quiver under the spray.

A little boy, poorly dressed, his face in a mischievous smile, enters the garden and steps on the hose behind the gardener’s back. The stream of water becomes thinner and thinner. The gardener is perplexed;

the boy can hardly keep from breaking into laughter—his cheeks are puffed out with the effort. And at the very moment that the gardener brings the nozzle close to his nose to see what’s the matter, the boy takes his foot off the hose! The stream of water hits the gardener in the face—you think the spray is going to hit you, too, and instinctively shrink back . . . But on the screen the wet gardener chases the mischievous boy; they run far away, growing smaller, and finally at the very edge of the picture, almost ready to fall to the floor, they grapple with each other. Having caught the boy, the gardener pulls him by the ear and spansks him. . . . They disappear. You are impressed by this lively scene, full of motion, taking place in deepest silence.

Another new picture on the screen. Three respectable men are playing whist. One of them is a clean-shaven gentleman, with the visage of a high government official, laughing with what must be a deep, bass laugh. Opposite him a nervous, wiry partner restlessly picks the cards from the table, cupidity in his gray face. The third person is pouring beer that the waiter had brought to the table; the waiter, stopping behind the nervous player, looks at his cards with tense curiosity. The players deal the cards and . . . the shadows break into soundless laughter. All of them laugh, even the waiter with his hands on hips, quite disrespectful in the presence of these respectable bourgeois. And this soundless laughter, the laughter of gray muscles in gray faces, quivering with excitement, is so fantastic. From it there blows upon you something that is cold, something too unlike a living thing.

Laughing like shadows, they disappear like shadows . . .

From far off an express train is rushing at you—look out! It speeds along just as if shot out of a giant gun. It speeds straight at you, threatening to run you over. The station-master hurriedly runs alongside it. The silent, soundless locomotive is at the very edge of the picture . . . The public nervously shifts in its chairs—this huge machine of iron and steel will rush into the dark room and crush everybody in it . . . But, appearing on the gray wall, the locomotive disappears beyond the frame of the screen, and the string of cars comes to a stop. The usual scene of crowding throngs when a train reaches a station. The gray people

soundlessly cry out, soundlessly laugh, silently walk, kiss each other without a sound.

Your nerves are strained; imagination carries you to some unnaturally monotonous life, a life without colour and without sound, but full of movement, the life of ghosts, or of people *damned* to the damnation of eternal silence, people who have been deprived of all the colours of life, all its sounds, and they are almost all the better for it . . .

It is terrifying to see this gray movement of gray shadows, noiseless and silent. Mayn’t this already be an intimation of life in the future? Say what you will—but this is a strain on the nerves. A wide use can be predicted, without fear of making a mistake, for this invention, in view of its tremendous originality. How great is its productivity, compared with the expenditure of nervous energy? Is it possible for it to attain such useful application as to compensate for the nervous strain it produces in the spectator? This is an important question, a still more important question in that our nerves are getting weaker and weaker, are growing more and more unstrung, are reacting less and less forcefully to the simple “impressions of daily life” and thirst more and more eagerly for new, strong, unusual, burning, and strange impressions. The cinematograph gives you them—and the nerves will grow cultivated on the one hand, and dulled on the other! The thirst for such strange, fantastic impressions as it gives will grow ever greater, and we will be increasingly less able and less desirous of grasping the everyday impressions of ordinary life. This thirst for the strange and the new can lead us far, very far, and “The Saloon of Death” may be shifted from the Paris of the end of the nineteenth century to the Moscow of the beginning of the twentieth.

I forgot to say that the cinematograph is shown at Aumond’s, the well-known Charles Aumond’s, the former stableman for General Boisdefre, they say.

Up to now our charming Charles Aumond has brought with him only 120 French women “stars” and ten men; his cinematograph exhibits so far very nice pictures, as you see. But, of course, this is not for long, and it is to be expected that the cinematograph will show “piquant” scenes of the life of the Paris *demi-monde*. “Piquant” here means debauched, and nothing else.





In addition to the pictures mentioned, there are two others. Lyons: women workers leave a factory. A crowd of lively, moving, gay, laughing women leave the wide gates, run across the screen and vanish. All of them are so nice, with such modest, lively faces, ennobled by toil. And in the dark room they are gazed at by their fellow-country-women, intensively gay, unnaturally noisy, extravagantly dressed, with some make-up on their faces, and incapable of understanding their Lyons compatriots.

The other picture is *The Family Breakfast*. A modest couple with a chubby first-born, "baby", is sitting at the table.

"She" is making coffee over an alcohol lamp, and with a loving smile looks on while her handsome young husband feeds his son with a spoon, feeds and smiles with the laughter of a happy man. Outside the window the leaves flutter, noiselessly flutter; the baby smiles at his father with all his chubby chin; everything bears the stamp of such a healthy, hearty, simple atmosphere.

And this picture is looked at by women deprived of the happiness of having a husband and children, the gay women "from Aumond's," stirred by the astonishment and envy of respectable women for their knowing how to dress, and the contempt, the disgusted feeling produced by their profession. They look on and laugh . . . but it is quite possible that their hearts ache with anguish. And it is possible that this gray picture of happiness, this soundless picture of the life of shadows is for them the shadow of the past, the shadow of their past thoughts and dreams of the possibility of such a life as this, but a life with bright, sounding laughter, a colourful life. And possibly many of them, looking at this picture, would like to cry, but cannot; they must laugh, for that is their sorrowful profession . . .

At Aumond's these two pictures are something in the nature of hard, biting irony for the women of his hall, and will doubtless be removed. I am convinced that they will soon, very soon, be replaced by pictures in

a genre more suited to the "Concert Parisien" and the demands of the fair. And the cinematograph, the scientific importance of which is as yet incomprehensible to me, will cater to the tastes of the fair and the debauchery of its hangers-on.

It will show illustrations to the works of De Sade and to the adventures of the Chevalier Fauxblas; it can provide the fair with pictures of the countless falls of Mlle. Nana, the protégée of the Parisian bourgeoisie, the beloved child of Emile Zola. Rather than serve science and aid in the perfection of man, it will serve the Nizhni-Novgorod Fair and help to popularise debauchery. Lumière borrowed the idea of moving photography from Edison, borrowed, developed and completed it, and probably did not foresee where and for whom his invention would be demonstrated.

It is surprising that the fair has not examined the possibilities of X-rays, and why Aumond, Toulon, Lomache and Co. have not yet utilised them for amusement and diversion. And this omission is a very serious one!

Besides. Possibly to-morrow X-rays will also appear on the screen at Aumond's, used in some way or other for "belly dances".

There is nothing in the world so great and beautiful but that man can vulgarise and dishonour it. And even in the clouds, where formerly ideals and dreams dwelt, they now want to print advertisements—for improved toilets, I suppose.

Hasn't this been mentioned in print yet? Never mind—you'll soon see it.

THE above translation from the Russian film magazine 'KINO ART' was made by Leonard Mins for 'The New Theatre,' where it first appeared.

## EMIL KOHL

TWO years ago an old man of eighty dressed in an ancient cutaway tail coat and shabby top-hat came to see me in Paris. Deaf and forgetful, there still clung to him an old-fashioned elegance of speech and manner. It had taken me a week of enquiries to discover his whereabouts, somewhere on the outskirts of Paris, where he was living on poor relief. His card, surrounded by half an inch of black, bore the legendary name of Monsieur Emil Kohl, animated cartoonist. Kohl, inventor of the cartoon film, died last month in a Paris hospital, forgotten by almost everyone in the French film industry.

Wistfully, Kohl told me that, much as he would like to assist me to find his films, he regretted he had no idea where they were. He feared that perhaps they had been destroyed, or again perhaps they were somewhere in America. After a pause in which he endeavoured to recollect the past, he continued:

"It was Monsieur Leon Gaumont who distributed them, but that was a long time ago, twenty-five years perhaps. You must excuse me, Madame—or is it Mademoiselle? I have forgotten a great deal. I regret there is so little I can tell you. Some were four hundred metres long".

I asked him whether it was true that he was the inventor of the cartoon.

"They say so, but who can tell? I think I am", Kohl answered. "I believe I remember making *Fantouche* in 1908".

*Fantouche*, one of Kohl's earliest cartoons, is a remarkable film, and no less extraordinary is his slightly later picture, *The Adventures of Baron Crack*. In both cartoons the characters, a jealous husband, a faithless wife, an enamoured policeman and the adventurous Baron, are executed in the style of children's drawings in white lines on black. Though the drawing is extremely simple, no cartoons before Disney have the same inventiveness, nor use inanimate objects with such imagination. Houses, lamp-posts and machines are endowed with intelligence and movement of their own. They walk about and are dramatised—an idea which disappeared during the war when the cartoon superseded in popularity other styles of trick film. In *Baron Crack*, the Baron, who plays with the elements as well as birds and pre-war machines with the nonchalance of a comic demi-god, monopolises a bird to transport him over a most abstract-looking sea; suddenly it vanishes, leaving its wings on the Baron's shoulders!

These early cartoons are two of the most interesting I've found for a picture covering the development of the cartoon, which I am making with the assistance of Karl Heinz Frank for the Film Institute. In Kohl's work one finds a preliminary sketch for much that develops later. His cartoons contain the elements of the realistic story fully developed by Fleischer in *Popeye*, as well as the fabulous fancies that delight Disney. Though Kohl was forgotten by the trade, he is still an encyclopædia for the technician.

Marie Seton





## **GENTLEMEN**

## **UNDERSTAND WAR**

***Russell Ferguson's provocative attack on the  
viewpoint expressed in***

## ***La Grande Illusion***

***the French Film about war which has attracted  
so much attention from the critics***

**W**AR brings out the best in us. This great truth, illustrated again and again in the work of Kipling, has been obscured for the last twenty years by the hysterical ravings of skunks like Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen, Herbert Read, and the impossible Hemingway. The indestructible chivalry of mankind has been insufficiently reported. The newsreels from Spain and China haven't helped much, all full of bombs and gas and refugees, with the emphasis on all the wrong things. We needed *La Grande Illusion* to redress the balance.

The lesson of the film is that when we mow each other down with machine guns and cook each other with mustard gas, we don't mean any harm. There's nothing personal in it. With all these Hemingways running loose, this had been forgotten. Rauffenstein puts it very well, just before he shoots Boeldieu through the stomach. He says, "I very much dread doing this" (meaning, "This hurts me more than it hurts you.") Unhappily, though it is Rauffenstein that gets hurt, it is Boeldieu that dies.

The death scene is very moving. Rauffenstein says, "I am terribly sorry. If I had known you were only pretending to escape, I should not have shot you. Anyway, I aimed at your legs". "Not at all, old fellow", says the dying man. "You only did your duty." (There once was a man who got his eye poked out with a lady's umbrella. She said she was very sorry. He said, "Never mind, Madam, I have another one".) Anyway, Rauffenstein goes to a small table which is standing near, and pours out a drink, looks at it reflectively, and drinks it up quickly. Then he goes back to the bedside and reverently closes the dead man's eyes.

War is, of course, an indispensable condition in scenes like these. How can you forgive somebody with your dying breath, if you are not dying? How can you bless those who persecute you, if nobody does? Boeldieu is a lucky man—he sacrifices his life for his country, keeps his parole, forgives his German friend, and expires in a blaze of glory. He owes Rauffenstein a considerable debt, for giving him a chance to die so bravely. Rauffenstein, at the other end of the gun, does not do so badly either. The unique circumstances enable him to show his love for his country in the most exalted manner, by killing a man he is very fond of. Thus do the conditions of war sanctify what would, in peace time, be a crime so unfortunate that it couldn't even happen.

Boeldieu, as it turned out, was merely throwing a dummy, to let two of his colleagues escape. This was a noble action, but he wasn't doing it for them *personally*, as he explained when they tried to thank him. There was nothing personal in it; it was for the flag. Which sounded like a smack in the face to the two bewildered rankers, but Rauffenstein understood, being an officer and a gentleman. And Boeldieu understood there was nothing personal in it when he got shot. Gentlemen understand war. Burning Joan of Arc was just a piece of tactics, as the Earl of Warwick explained to her. He meant her no harm, personally.



**B**UT the lower ranks are different, and often the personal element creeps in, with disastrous results. What happens then is the worst thing possible—the war stops altogether. It is sometimes very difficult to get it started again.

In the recent street riots in Paris, both sides used to pack up the riot every night in time for the last Tube home, and turn out next morning, hurrying into the city in case they should be late for the riot. This arrangement, incomprehensible to military minds, was simply a mutual understanding of personal convenience.

The Paris rioting wasn't a proper war of course, but the same thing happens in proper wars, too. There was the famous occasion when the Western Front was disturbed by a distressing outbreak of fraternising, brought on by Christmas parcels, and aggravated, no doubt, by extra issues of rum. Had the feeling been allowed to spread, the war might have been brought to a complete standstill, but the officers were able to stamp it out before it got really serious.

Similar incidents were common, they say, in the American Civil War. At blackberry-time, the troops used to sound a truce and pick berries in No Man's Land. Sometimes both sides got tired of shooting each other across a river, and went swimming instead. These were the lapses of half-trained troops, who had not learned that fraternising is the most dangerous thing in any war, because if it goes too far, peace may break out.

But Rauffenstein, the true officer, the real military man, has himself so well in hand that he can afford to unbend with his prisoner, and yet be sure he will be able to shoot, when the occasion arises. It is very difficult, but he is big enough to do it.

For the most part, happily, such personal encounters are few in modern warfare, in which the enemy is generally out of sight. The real test of the soldier is hand-to-hand fighting. It is easy enough to train him to pull the lanyard of a gun, there's nothing very personal in that; or to spray an advancing host with machine-gun bullets, there's nothing very personal in that; or to drop a bomb on people far below, there's nothing very personal in that; but when he is faced with an individual at bayonet-range, things are a bit awkward. There is a grave danger that he will be overcome with private feelings, and find himself unable to stick the iron into his opposite number.

For this particular situation, a different technique has had to be evolved. The personal feeling is so immediate and so urgent, that it has to be offset with a personal feeling of the opposite kind. This is done in the following way.

At bayonet practice, an orator stands by, and tells the men what a horrid, loathsome, dangerous species of vermin the Boche is. He works the men up with great skill, until they reach a pitch of excitement in which they scarcely know where they are, or what they are doing, except that they have to keep on lunging and twisting. It was a detail of the bayonet practice that made everybody laugh, in one of Buster Keaton's

early comedies. The instructor was saying, "And when you get him, don't just pull the bayonet out. Twist it round and round," when suddenly Buster fainted. Everybody laughed at that, but, of course, the incident had its serious side. It showed how difficult it is to take a raw recruit and make a real soldier of him.

**B**UT we have come down too far from the altitude of Renoir's film, which is about officers. This is very important. Officers do not use bayonets, or rifles, in fact it is quite possible, and even usual, for them to have a long and useful life, without ever killing anybody with their own hands, and a very good thing too, for they are thus able to preserve their proper professional detachment from the more sordid details of their work. (Some of them, like Tony Perelli, can play the violin. Some of them, in fact, do.)

This detachment is important and must be preserved by every possible means. Field organisation takes full account of this. Nowadays, the higher an officer's rank, the further he is from the firing line. This system ensures that the most responsible men are farthest away from the sordid details; thus their morale is kept up, a most important point, and the morale of the troops gains, in consequence. For, if the general knew too much about the fighting conditions, he might hesitate to send his men into action, and if the men did not go into action, what would become of the war?

The settings and the treatment in this film are exactly right. It is about the best in us, and it is quiet and as smooth as silk. *Journey's End* was noisier, for it was about an officer's behaviour in the field. *All Quiet* was about soldiers fighting, and it was so full of bangs and dead men, that the ex-soldiers in the cinema got shell-shock all over again. This is all very proper, so far as artistic treatment

goes, for there are levels of altitude in war which correspond with the rank of those engaged in it. Very high war takes place in the capitals, behind locked doors. Very low war takes place exactly midway, between the trenches. In our film, the war is higher than in any other war-film yet made—it is neither tactical nor physical, but spiritual, so it takes place outside of the world altogether, partly in a prison and partly in a high mountain farm. The theatre of war, strictly speaking, is Rauffenstein's soul. There the battle is fought between the Fatherland and Boeldieu. The Fatherland wins—which is just as it should be, if we must have war, as Hitler and Mussolini tell us.

The final result is a film which is just about ideal for the beginning of a new war. Wars begin in the starry altitudes of loyalty and devotion. (The Fascists have already got most of the work done in this department.) As the war goes on, the men think less and less of what they have come from, and more and more of what they are going to. By the end of the war, they have heard so many loud bangs and seen so many dead men and broadcast viscera, that they can't forget it for twenty years, during which we hear nothing but the whining of Hemingways.

After about twenty years a new generation has arrived, so it's game to start all over again. Off we go, on the highest plane once again. Your home and your loved ones, your king and your country, the boys are wonderful, wonderful; and at this stage, it is very reassuring to be convinced once again, that war is not really killing, and Rauffenstein did not really kill Boeldieu, but just executed him, and Boeldieu liked being killed anyway, and war brings out the best in us, and the Lads at the Front are Marvellous.



*The German peasant (Dita Parlo) finds the two French Officers hiding in her farm.*





# SPEEDSTERS

replace

## COWBOYS

in the serial films of today.  
Thomas Baird recalls the  
glories of the old serials, and  
laments their passing.

**A** LITTLE over twenty years ago, I started to go to the pictures. I was then a small boy living in a provincial city. There was quite a ritual about this picture-going. The first requirement was a penny. Pennies only come on Saturdays and, strange coincidence, the "Penny Matinee" came on the same day. Part of the ritual was to forswear the sweetie shops on Saturday morning. This called for severe discipline. It is true that we children had watched the highly dramatic posters all the week. Early on Monday morning the bill poster had pasted them up opposite the school gate. At the eleven o'clock interval we hoisted each other up on to the school wall to see the new posters. From the top of the wall would come shouts of: "It's a cowboy", or "It's about lions", or "There's a man in a mask". Imagination eked out these brief abstracts, and by Saturday excitement was at fever pitch; many a Friday night was sleepless in anticipation. But still it was difficult to pass the sweetie shop and occasionally we succumbed to the temptation of toffee-apples and liquorice straps. Once the precious penny was broken there was nothing for it but to get the greatest value by spending in four shops. But Saturday afternoon was a misery without the matinee.

The second item of the ritual was to be at the picture house fully an hour before the programme commenced. We had to stand in a queue and fight periodically to keep our positions. In the quiet periods we read comics, Buffalo Bills, and Sexton Blakes. Part of the ritual was to swap comics. As a story was finished off a shout went up of: "Swap you comics", and there was great reaching and struggling to pass the paper to someone else in the queue.

About fifteen minutes to three o'clock the queue grew tense. Comics were stuffed in pockets and the battle to retain a place in the queue started. The struggling and pushing continued for about five minutes. Then the doors opened and a stream of children spilled into the picture house. There was a fight for

the best seats. The right of possession meant little, and many a well-directed push slid a small boy from a well-earned seat into the passage.

Occasionally the programme was suitable, and by that I mean interesting to us children. Often, however, the feature was quite meaningless to us. On rare occasions I can remember films like *Last Days of Pompeii*, *Tarzan of the Apes*, Cowboy films, *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*, and the war films, giving us unexpected thrills, but in the main we went for the more comprehensible shorts: Bronco Billy, John Bunny, the Keystone Kops, Ford Sterling, Fatty Arbuckle, then one day a funny little waiter who afterwards we learned to call "Charlie". Newsreels with soldiers, guns and bursting shells we loved. But we went for one thing above all others—the serial. These were the days of the *Clutching Hand*, *The Exploits of Elaine*, *The Black Box* and *The Laughing Mask*. Many of the names have faded and been forgotten, but I can recall that the heroine *par excellence* of all small boys was Pearl White. As Elaine she triumphed week after week, and later, changing with the times, she was *Pearl of the Army*. The villain of villains was an oriental called Warner Oland and, if I remember rightly, he was the Clutching Hand Himself, but this I will not swear to because these old serials had already learned the trick of making the obviously bad man become good in the last reel. I can remember living through fifteen exciting weeks to learn who the Clutching Hand was: to-day I can't remember whether it was Oland or not. I seem to be losing my sense of values. Week after week we followed Warner Oland through his baleful adventures. Later he became the malevolent Dr. Fu Manchu. Then for a while I missed him, but, joy of joys, he reappeared as Charlie Chan. It is sad news that he has, perhaps, made his last picture. He has been one of my symbols of a changing cinema; the evil and the nefarious Clutching Hand became in time a prolific and model parent and fought on the side of the angels.

The blonde hero and partner of Pearl White in so many of these episodes was Crichton Hale. To us, twenty years ago, he was a superman. He could hang for a week to the edge of a cliff and on the next Saturday miraculously climb to safety. It is perhaps a greater miracle that we, who, in imitation, hung from the washing-house roof, escaped with our lives. But the master mind—the great detective—was Craig Kennedy. That is the name of the character. I doubt if I ever knew the actor's name and can still remember my astonishment when he turned up as a naval officer in a feature picture. He existed only for us as a detective with no other function than to answer the plea of Crichton Hale to discover the whereabouts of Pearl White, or, out of bubbling retorts, to distil the antidote to the bite of the beetle which Warner Oland had secreted in her bouquet of flowers.

Periodically, a rumour ran round. It was whispered in hushed tones in the waiting queue and passed from lip to lip along the rows of excited children. Pearl White was dead. Somebody's uncle had read in a paper—not an ordinary paper, but an American paper—that she had been killed jumping from an express train on to a motor-cycle. But she kept turning up week after week and this continual resurrection was sufficient to discount each rumour.

Last week I attended a press view of a serial. All the old characters were there. A black-faced villain (Julian Rivero), a thin-lipped henchman (Jason Roberts), a beautiful schoolboy's heroine (Lola Lane), a juvenile of strange intelligence and unerring instinct (Frankie Darro) and a hero, smiling, confident, wise, resourceful and athletic (Jack Mulhall). There they all were, and in episode after episode they romped through their tantalizing escapades. The hero leapt from certain death at the end of one reel to equally certain safety at the beginning of the next; falling in mid air at the end of part three, he easily caught hold of a beam at the beginning of part four; flung from a racing car at the end of part four, he landed safely,



with never a scratch, in part five. The scream of the heroine in part one turned through tears to laughter in part two; the leer of certain triumph of the villain in part nine turned to a scowl of miserable defeat in part ten.

I was unable to sit through all the hours necessary to reach the satisfactory conclusion which must be inevitable in the final episode, but I am sure that *Burn 'Em Up Barnes* kissed Miss Lane in the end, that Frankie Darro achieved his aim both of a college education and being an ace cameraman, that the villains met a sticky end, in a burning racing-car, that Miss Lane never signed that deed which would have ruined her, and which she threatened to sign at least ten times and would have signed, had not Mr. Mulhall, driving at 413.03 miles per hour, arrived in THE NICK OF TIME. Of all these things I am certain, and who would have it otherwise?

But even with all these familiar items I felt a little strange in the face of this serial. The fatal contract was there; true, the evil leers; true, the heroic athletics; but it was all set in a strange new world. There was no oriental mystery, no cowboy horses, no swift smuggling of drugs, no torture chamber, no shooting, no labs. with fantastic chemistry, no death-ray. It was all set for the new generation of youngsters who read "Popular Mechanics" in the Saturday queues and not for me, with my world of Sexton Blake and Buffalo Bill. The hero is a racing driver. The vital document was not a faded parchment taken from an old sea chest but a cinematograph film taken on a Mitchell. The hidden wealth was not gold but oil. Death came not suddenly by poisoned arrow or slowly in the torture chamber, but fiercely in burning automobiles or lingeringly on the sidewalks after a crash.



The picture on the opposite page is from a 1914 Pearl White serial, 'The Perils of Pauline,' and is reproduced from Gilbert Seldes's 'Movies for the Million' (Batsford, 7s 6d.) by permission of the publishers. Above: Buck Jones in 'The Phantom Rider.'

## SPEECH ON THE SCREEN

A second selection, in response  
to many requests, of well-written  
and amusing prose speeches

*Burn 'Em Up Barnes* is for a new generation, and even with my tender years I do not belong.

### Captains Courageous

Spencer Tracy as Manuel

(Screen Play by J. L. Mahin, Marc Connelly and Dale Van Every)

**Manuel:** Say, my father when he alive, he make better songs than me. Songs about the sun and the sea, songs about the clouds. Big songs about the wind and the storm. And little songs too, about the tip of my mother's nose. Oh, my father he feel beautiful inside.

**Harvey:** Is that all he did was sing?

**Manuel:** Is that . . .? My father was the best fisherman in the whole Madeira islands, and that's everyplace.

**Harvey:** Well, that's not so much.

**Manuel:** How you mean, 'not so much'?

**Harvey:** Well, I mean he didn't do much for you. He didn't leave you anything.

**Manuel:** He didn't le . . .? He—he leave me this hurdy-gurdy that his grandfather leave him. He teach me how to fish, how to sail boat. He give me arms and hands and feet. How to feel good outside and he teach me how to feel good inside. My father do all this and he have seventeen other kids beside. What else a father do?

### Nothing Sacred

Charles Winninger as Dr. Downer

(Screen Play by Ben Hecht)

**Downer:** You know what I think, young feller? I think yer a newspaper man. I can smell 'em. I've always been able to smell 'em. Excuse me while I open the windows. I'll tell you briefly what I think of newspapermen. The hand of God reaching down into the mire couldn't elevate one of 'em to the depths of degradation. Not by a million miles. I'm a fair-minded man, young feller, but when you been robbed, swindled, cheated, for twenty-two years out of a fortune, it's pardonable to formulate an opinion. Moses in the Mountain! You're from the Morning Star! Stay right where you are. Don't move—I'll show ya somethin' that'll freeze ya. I entered this contest with a clean pair of hands. Who are the six Greatest Americans? I named them and proved why—writing on one side of the paper. And what happened? Did I win the ten thousand dollars? No, siree! Did I win the five thousand? Did they even try to save their face by giving me one of the smaller one thousand dollar prizes?

Not that gang of chicken thieves. Here's what they gave me. Read it. A cheque for one dollar.

The Morning Star had its chance to win my respect twenty-two years ago. They saw fit to swindle and belittle me. Very well. I'll prove to them before I die who the six great Americans are and who was entitled to the first prize.

Do you know who got that ten thousand dollars? The editor's wife—that's who.

### Marie Walewska

Charles Boyer as Napoleon

(Screen Play by S. Hoffenstein, S. Virtel and S. N. Behrman)

My victories stand in the sun, Marie—but I have known defeat.

When I was a little boy at school, I was poor and timid and despised. I was thin and underfed. There was a great fireplace in the hall, it was bitterly cold. I used to try to get near the fire, but the bigger boys crowded me away. I could never get warm enough. I haven't been warm enough since. I shall never be warm enough.

That was defeat. When I was twenty-seven I left the woman I adored to lead an Army of the Republic. The world acclaimed me as the Saviour of France. My wife received the news of my victories in the arms of other men. That was defeat.

The ties of blood are strong in me. I have placed my brothers and sisters upon thrones. They have rewarded me with their quarrels, their jealousies, their selfishness. That is another defeat. And I have no son. Nobody. Only my mother has remained.

My mother. But even she—after all—a man suffers alone, dies alone, dreams alone. My dreams—I want to achieve the impossible—peace in Europe. Victories breed wars of revenge, wars of revenge breed wars of reprisal—an endless cycle of bloodshed. I want to destroy forever that wavering balance of power that means war with every tilt of the scale. My dream is to achieve a United States in Europe. There is a new idea abroad in the world—the idea of democracy. Men are created free and equal. We are human beings first, and races and nations afterwards. I want a federated Europe, with a common law, a common interest, a common happiness, a common hope for the future!

And they call me a tyrant. And they frighten little children with my name. That, too, is defeat.

The next time you see me standing in the sun, remember this. Good night, Madame.



## Stars of Stage and Screen

# RALPH RICHARDSON

and

# LAURENCE OLIVIER

*The Othello and Iago  
of Tyrone Guthrie's  
latest venture at the  
Old Vic, London. Inter-  
viewed for W.F.N. by  
Henry Adler.*



**T**HE tall, swarthy Moor, wearing his vivid Eastern gown and smoking a large briar pipe, invited me to a seat in his dressing room. In a moment, a gamboge but handsome face looked in, which I recognised as that of the more elusive Iago. I had been chasing him for days. But Mr. Olivier, believing that an actor's job ends with acting, does not normally grant interviews. He smiled, and curled up in a chair.

"Since you *are* here," he said, "perhaps we can talk together."

The strong lights in the little room glared down at the sleek head of the "hellish villain" and the glossy, leonine mane of the majestic Moor. This was a godsend. I had wanted to speak to either Laurence Olivier or to Ralph Richardson. I had hoped that I might even separately speak to both. But here were both simultaneously; close friends, two of the most interesting and versatile personalities in films and the theatre, now opposed in the dramatically contrasting roles of Othello and Iago.

\* \* \*

In 1921, in a performance of "The Merchant of Venice" at the Brighton Little Theatre, Lorenzo was played by a nineteen-year-old youth named Ralph Richardson. In 1922, in a boy's production of "The Taming of the Shrew" at the Stratford Memorial Theatre, Katharina was played by a boy of fifteen named Laurence Olivier.

Olivier studied under Elsie Fogerty, and Richardson toured in the provinces for four years and then joined the Birmingham Repertory Company, appearing as Arthur Varwell in their production of "Yellow Sands". In 1928, Olivier joined the Company, and played Malcolm in the modern dress "Macbeth", a play in which he did not reappear for ten years. Richardson and he acted together for the first time, the former as the Lord, and the latter as Tranio, in "The Taming of the Shrew", and in "Back to Methuselah".



He played Michael (Beau) Geste in the play; Victor Prynne in the brilliant quartet including Gertrude Lawrence, Adrienne Allan, and Noel Coward which comprised "Private Lives"; played the same part in New York, then went to Hollywood. The films in which he appeared included: *The Yellow Ticket*, *Westward Passage*, and *Friends and Lovers*.

In 1934, he played Bothwell in Gordon Daviot's "Queen of Scots" in which, as will be remembered, Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies played the title-rôle. He supported Marie Tempest in "Theatre Royal" and, becoming actor-manager, appeared in "The Golden Arrow" at the Whitehall.

In 1935, he played Mercutio to John Gielgud's Romeo, and then Romeo. St. John Ervine said that this was the best Romeo he had seen. His success seems to have led naturally to his career at the Old Vic, and to his film career of which *Fire Over England* and *The Divorce of Lady X* are the two most striking examples.

Ralph Richardson returned to Shakespeare earlier. It is amusing to note that he returned to it in *Othello*, but as Roderigo! This was in 1930, with Paul Robeson playing the Moor, while Olivier was in "Private Lives". Richardson then joined the Old Vic Company, playing the Prince of Wales in "Henry the Fourth, Part One", Caliban, Bolingbroke, Enobarbus, Sir Toby Belch, and Bluntschli in Shaw's "Arms and the Man". He appeared in the Festival Company at Malvern, together with Robert Donat, returned to the Vic-Wells Company to play the Ghost and the First Grave-Digger in "Hamlet", a contrast indicative of his ability in both tragedy and comedy, and acted in "Othello" for the second time, now as Iago to Wilfred Walter's Moor.

In the next summer, he returned to Malvern and played Sergeant Fielding in Shaw's "Too True to be Good". He came back to London and acted in two Maugham plays; as Collie Stratton in "For Services Rendered" and in the title-rôle of "Sheppey". After playing Mr. Darling and Captain Hook in the Palladium "Peter Pan", he acted in two Priestley plays, in "Eden End" and as Cornelius in the play of that name.

In 1935, while Olivier was playing Mercutio in London, Richardson was playing the same part when touring with Katherine Cornell in America. The rest of his career is familiar history, his stage appearance as Doctor Clitterhouse, and his films: *The Colonel* in *The Man Who Could Work Miracles*, the Boss in *The Shape of Things to Come*. Illustrative of his versatility is the fact that recently one could leave one cinema, after seeing Richardson in the comedy rôle of the dim-witted Lord Mear in *The Divorce of Lady X*, and enter another one to see him as the squire in *South Riding*. Now he is playing "Othello" for the fourth time, and his progress is symbolised by the fact that this time he is playing the title-rôle.

\* \* \*

"It's funny about *Othello*," said Mr. Richardson. "I know the play so well. I've played Roderigo, and Iago to Wilfred Walter's *Othello* at the Old Vic, and now it's *Othello*



Above: Ralph Richardson as *Othello*, Curigwen Lewis as *Desdemona*; on opposite page Laurence Olivier as *Iago*.

himself. When I hear people speaking my old parts, it's like hearing ghosts. I want to stop and correct them."

"*Othello*," said Mr. Richardson in a measured voice to which I suspect the dignity of the rôle has much contributed, "is not a part one plays in the ordinary sense. You have to back up the sort of thin part you get in modern plays with your own personality. But I, for one, haven't the strength, let alone the desire, to elaborate on the tremendous part that Shakespeare has written. It's about as much as a man with normal strength can do to 'read the score'."

"It's *Othello*'s play," said Mr. Olivier. "Iago speaks in short passages. He hasn't any of those tremendous speeches, and emotional climaxes. Iago doesn't rival *Othello* in importance."

*Othello* removed his pipe from his mouth, turned his sombre, coffee-coloured face toward Iago, and fixed his large, mysterious eyes reprovingly on him. "I don't know about that," he said mildly. "Iago speaks in short bursts, but he's whirring all the time—like a sewing machine. He's a man of great nervous energy—"

"—who might have been great," agreed Iago. "He has been perverted and frustrated by jealousy at being passed over for the captaincy. It might happen to anyone. Suppose Ralph and I were condemned to play film extra parts all the time, not allowed decent parts at all. We should either have to put on plays for ourselves, or go mad like Al Capone in prison, or go wrong as anyone would who has strength and energy that's denied expression. If it hadn't been for jealousy, Iago might have been a great man."

"All Shakespeare's tragedies," said Mr. Richardson, "deal with greatness misdirected or destroyed through a frailty. Mr. Gielgud who, of course, has a great understanding of Shakespeare, suggested to me that *Othello* is a saint overcome by villainy. But I don't

think *Othello* was a saint. Despite his greatness I think that jealousy was in him all the time. I admit that there's an objection to that. In almost his last speech *Othello* speaks of himself as "One not easily jealous."

"Not easily jealous," said Mr. Olivier. "But capable of jealousy."

"Yes," agreed Mr. Richardson, "I think he's a more tragic figure like that. If you regard him as a majestic oak, and Iago a little fuse niggling away in the trunk and finally blowing it up,—well, where's the tragedy? A big tree has been knocked down. We say: Tut-tut! It's a sad accident! But it's not a tragedy. You get tragedy only when your characters are of human stature, not gods, when despite greatness, one sees in them the flaw and weakness which destroys them—from inside. I can understand the jealousy of *Othello* because I'm jealous myself. It comes through pride."

"Future plans?" repeated Mr. Olivier. "I don't know. I don't know at all. This stage work gives one a freedom which films, by their very nature, can't. You can move on the stage, place yourself where you like in the audience's eye, select your climaxes. You can't do that in films."

"Laughton can say: 'I want the cameras to concentrate on my eyes in this scene'," commented Mr. Richardson. "He, and Chaplin, can make the camera do what they want, make it bring out their strong points. But Laughton and Chaplin have a unique position. For the most part, the director says: 'I'd like a close-up here, and a long shot there,'" and Mr. Richardson mimed god-like manipulations with lengths of celluloid, "and the actor is passive material. Yes, the stage gives more scope."

Mr. Richardson and Mr. Olivier looked thoughtfully at the clock.

"Well . . ." said Mr. Richardson.

"Heigh-ho," said Mr. Olivier.

"Good-bye," said Mr. Olivier.

"Good-bye," said Mr. Richardson.



# The CONQUEST of the AIR



**T**wo years ago while the birds of finance were flying high and Mr. Wells was shaping things to come, Alexander Korda decided to make *The Conquest of the Air*. It was to be the first feature documentary. John Monk Saunders was hired to write the script, because he'd written scripts for *Wings* and *Dawn Patrol*, but when he produced his script, things began to go wrong. Director after director tried to make something of it. Zoltan Korda did a couple of

sequences, Les Garmes shot scenes at Stirling Castle, William Cameron Menzies and John Monk Saunders tried their hands. Production costs mounted and so did publicity. There were brushes with technical experts; glorious stills appeared all over the world. But it was no use. The picture had to be shelved. All that had been achieved were some isolated sequences, some good and some bad, which never began to look like a picture.

A few months ago Alexander Korda de-

cided to take the film off the shelf and see what could be done. He has always been a producer of good intention and *Conquest* was a good intention he highly prized. He called in Donald Taylor, head of Strand Films to produce the film. A production unit was formed consisting of Alexander Shaw (Director), George Noble (Cameraman), and Richard Q. MacNaughten (Editor). A limited production budget was assigned and a new script written. Now after four months' work



# ★ ★ ★ A first view

(Exclusive  
to W.F.N.)

★ ★

*The Conquest of the Air* has been completed, the first feature length documentary. WFN has secured a first view of the completed film. It is a six-reeler and the first reaction is that it holds its length. This is remarkable, inasmuch as there is no story link, the film being a historical narration of fact. It begins with a simple wind sequence, "The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth." It follows with an impression that man's highest aspiration has always been to rise to the sky, and as he was unable to accomplish this himself he invested his gods and devils with the power. The next sequence is the bird-men, who attempted to fly with wings attached to their bodies. Succeeding them are the scientists, Roger Bacon, Leonardo da Vinci and Borrelli who envisaged machines to carry men into the air.

Time lapses and continuity are maintained by titles, perhaps a little pompous in tone. The era of the balloonists follows; the first ascent of a man is re-staged. The failure of the balloon is shown and the early experimenters like Sir George Cayley, Henson and Stringfellow point the way to the development of the aeroplane. At this point in the film there seems to be some weakness, as the development of the combustion engine and its importance in the development of the aeroplane is not sufficiently stressed. The experiments of Lilienthal are shown with much photographic beauty. The re-creation of the Wright Brothers' first flight follows, and with a commendable courage the producers have photographed this on a windy, dull day, a circumstance which enhances the drama of man's first controlled flight. A

brief sequence shows types of early aeroplanes and leads into Bleriot's historic flight across the Channel. Then comes the war, with man's dreams turned to his own destruction. From this point on the film becomes aggressively documentary, the progress of flying, from the war until now, is shown in terms of record-breakers. All the heroic figures flash across the screen in a March of Time sequence, the record breakers coming off better in retrospect than their modern critics will allow. Modern civil aviation forms the next sequence, with a background of the devices that make air travel safe. Next a fast-moving sequence shows the part of the aeroplane in modern life, apart from carrying passengers and freight. Then, after an orgy of information, the producers let themselves go with a sequence on the beauty of flight—"To-day the aeroplane soars like a bird . . . it flies on serene to continue man's conquest of the air". This sequence is on the long side and could do with judicious pruning. It is a pity too, that in this sequence Arthur Bliss who composed the music has not caught the intention of the producers. The film is delicate, exciting and graceful but the music is fussy. However, Bliss has not done a bad job on the rest of the film. *Conquest* comes back to fact with a sequence on Piccard and the stratosphere, but soon leaves it for an ending which is an imaginative conception of rocket planes of the future which may travel faster than sound.

IT will be seen that the film covers a great deal of ground, mostly technical ground too, and it is a tribute to the producers that they have maintained the interest for one hour.

Two interesting things emerge from this film. First, that flying and the conquest of the air has never been a materialist idea. The men who conquered and are conquering the air to-day are idealists, and the film gives them that credit. The second interesting point is the subordination of the actors to the idea. Although there are one or two names, Laurence Olivier, Margaretta Scott, and other well-known actors, they never obtrude their personalities over the scene they are enacting. It would have been disaster in a film of this nature had it been so.

Individual credit must go to the cameramen, Wilkie Cooper, Hans Schneeberger and George Noble, who have turned in a handsome job. The film covers every branch of movie work; there are diagrams, historical prints, crowd scenes in studio and on location; there is documentary material, newsreel material, trick work and model work; there are animated titles and much back projection. All the technicians deserve credit for making the film homogeneous.

We will reserve our critical appraisal until the film is released, but pending this we bring these notes on a production whose success or failure may have important repercussions not only on the documentary movement, but also on the industry.

David Thompson





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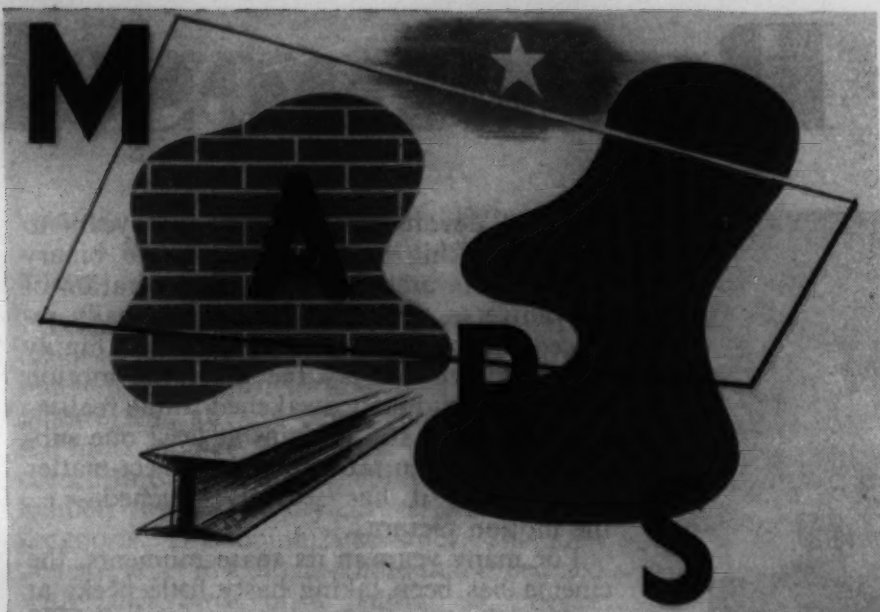
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# HOUSES

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# LIVE IN!

Arthur Elton among the Architects

**N**O capitals on their columns. No capitals in their catalogue. Such is one side of "modern" architecture. It is a symptom which is important to everyone who takes serious notice of public relations, for this is formalism. Formalism has plunged Russia into an aesthetic chaos and has led to bloodshed and execution. In this country, formalism is as small as a cloud the size of a man's hand, but like Rotha's speeded up symbolic clouds, it may soon cover the sky. It would not be important were it not that in the storm which follows, many admirable works wrongly identified with formalism will be swept away; for the good will be taken with the bad.

It is architecture to which we must turn to study the movement, for architecture has a permanence which the other arts lack. The formalist film can be kept in its tin, formalist and surrealist paintings can be taken down from your walls if you choose to cut your losses, formalist books need not be read. But formalist architecture costs money to build, costs money to destroy. Early this year an exhibition of modern architecture appeared, sponsored by the Mars Group. The first three letters stand for "Modern Architectural Research." The "S" seems to be a gratuitous addition. Perhaps it stands for "Sez you?"

The exhibition was sensibly arranged so that a spectator could start at the beginning and walk through in an orderly way. But fearing the practical, disdaining the pedantic, the exhibits were out to startle. Entertainment rather than instruction was the note. Somehow one felt this was not particularly modern. The arrangers of the exhibition seem to have noted all the vulgar showmanship of the box-office film, but had little of its refreshing technical virtuosity.

The front of its catalogue, which we illustrate above, is typical. You will see that it has two squiggly symbolic shapes, one for brickwork and one for wood. Underneath them is a girder, the essential core of almost any building. The Mars outlook, shies at reality. Its symbolic bricks have a living quality because they are not real, but the girder, badly drawn, weak and footling, has not caught the imagination of the artist. Like a good Victorian he plumped for decoration without content, and so it was with the exhibition. The exhibition contained some examples of good architecture

and excellent photographs, but it had no ability to fit them into a clearly thought out whole. A muddle-headed philosophy guided their display.

Most of us admit the world we live in is chaotic, undisciplined, unplanned. Here at the Mars group, one would have said, was the opportunity to bring to a focus the constructive ideas which, were they but used, could create a fine new world. But the opportunity was not taken. Instead of practical fact and practical diagram, a mass of symbols shook the eye of the spectator. (Can there be Victorian insular prejudice somewhere? Can one explain otherwise how the Mars Group, with the Paris Exhibition under their nose, could in so apparently calculated a way make all the mistakes which that great exhibition avoided?)

It is worth carrying this investigation a little farther for the Mars Exhibition does not represent only the stuttering ideas of a few enthusiasts; it is a beacon and a warning. The truth is that these people are the new Victorians. Victorian in their love of complex inessentials obscuring essential truth but alas, not Victorian in their gusto. The Mars Group mind has the complexity of the St. Pancras Hotel but not its *joie de vivre*.

The first thing that struck the visitor to the Mars Group was a room which claimed 'to state the problem'. Building needs for habitation; building needs for work, architecture for the service of the community; transport and town planning. Fine sounding words. But the ideas were presented in shabby symbols. The maps were obscured by fiddle faddle novelties of moving photographs and obscure transparencies. Next, one went down a passage to see the contribution of the scientist, the engineer and the manufacturer. But photo-muddlage had come into its own. Perhaps the scientists were scientific, perhaps the engineers were good constructors, perhaps the manufacturers manufactured well. But all we grasped is that they provide fine raw material for the photo-muddler.

Next the domestic scene. The place where we live and eat and where our children (if we have any) play. In the sitting-room it was striking that everything was massive, cubic and apparently either built into the wall or attached to the floor. Here, we can imagine the architect saying, is what I think you ought to live in. So that my ideas shall not be disturbed, I shall make every effort to prevent you having any ideas at all.

I shall arrange for the walls to have no pictures, you shall have no chance to rearrange according to the whims of your personal tastes. There shall be no mess, no personality.

That this is not absolutely unfair may be illustrated by a conversation I had at the Design In Industry's Congress at Bexhill. He was an architect. He said the trouble with re-housing working-class people is that they take their ornaments and pictures to their new home and spoil the look of the rooms. So, he smirked, I am going to make the mantelpiece like a gabled roof so that no ornaments can stand on it. For buildings are built for architects, not for people to live in.

The Mars Group excelled itself on the nursery. Perhaps the designer was not familiar with children. Hard and sharp corners with a double-tier bunk for two children to sleep in (are we not allowed to have more than two children?). The top bunk was reached by a rope ladder and was several feet from the floor. The children of the future will be morons or be paralysed. These will be the only ones to survive. The rest will have fallen out of the top bunk and broken their necks.

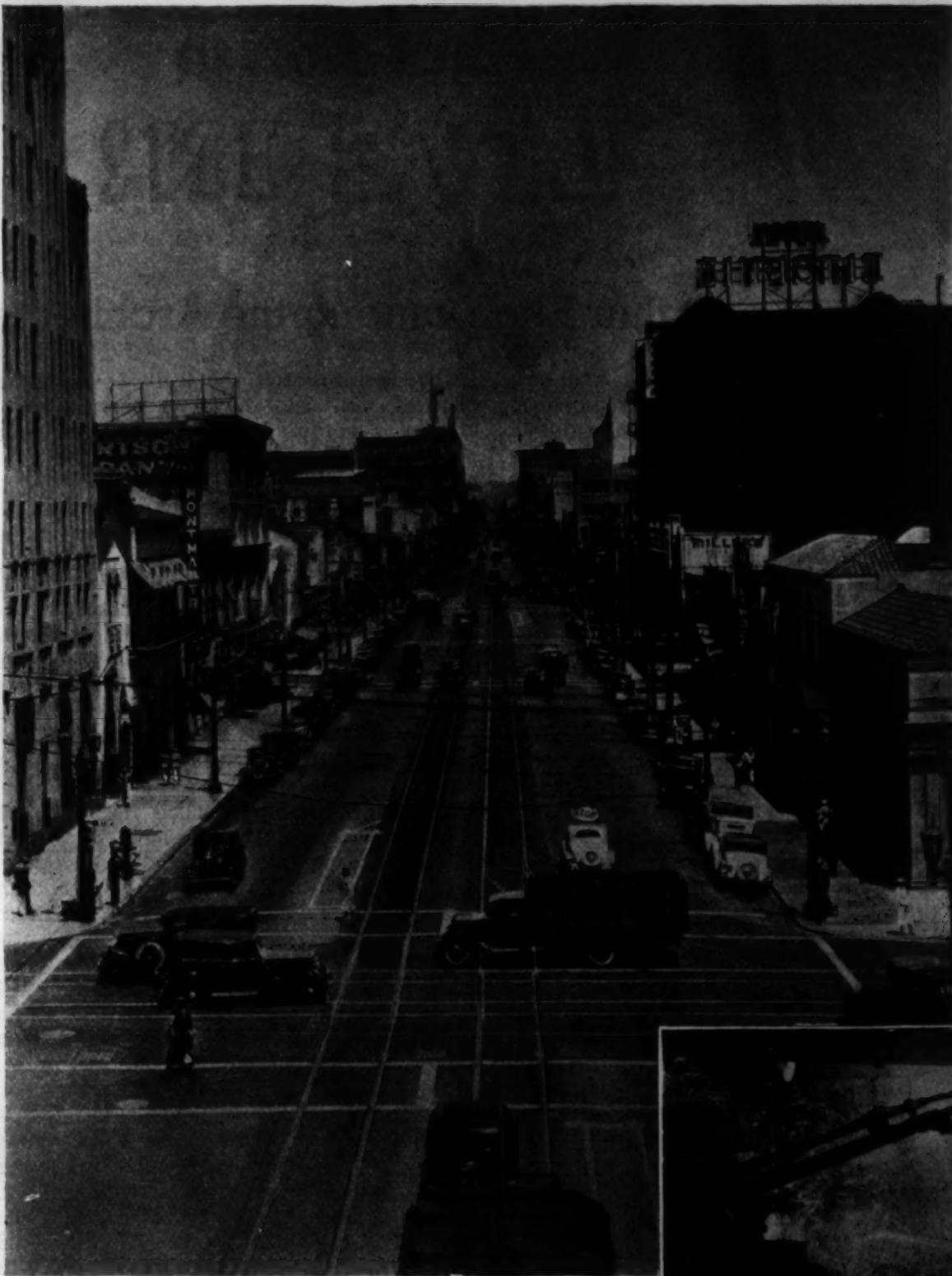
Then a great big splash of photographs and models, many of them fine and interesting. But putting labels on the photographs to say what they represent was bowing to the natural and vicious curiosity of the bystander.

Then, finally, some pictures of people of the future. What place will women have? For the Mars Group, women should be kept either in the nursery or in the kitchen. And here one finished one's walk through the new Victorian Age, Victorian in its intellectual fussiness, Victorian in its complacency, but without the gusto, the pleasure in fussiness for its own sake, the reverence of the scientist which so nobly offset the defects of Victorian aesthetics.

And how does all this affect you and me, you may ask. It affects us very much, for groups like the Mars Group have not only embraced the shoddy bad things, but are blurring the creative outline of fine things too. When the tide turns against Mars you will find Le Bourget airport being razed to the ground as formalist. The clear-headed citizen looking for ways to rebuild his cities will sheer off the fine discoveries of science into the arms of the Royal Academy and the R.I.B.A. We shall be in the grip of people like the firm which recently marketed tiles of imitation thatch.



# The Cinema Becomes In



Above: Hollywood Boulevard.

Right: A scene from 'Stand-In,' with Leslie Howard, Joan Blondell and Humphrey Bogart.

On opposite page: A paving-stone in the lobby of the Chinese Theatre, Hollywood.

AFTER devoting some forty odd years to dramatising everything from the binary fission of an amoeba to the disintegration of the universe, and after being practically reduced to thumbing through the old family album to while away the time, the motion picture has suddenly awakened to the realisation that there still remains at least one substantially virgin source of subject-matter upon which it has scarcely touched—i.e., the motion picture.

For many years in its spare moments, the cinema has been taking hasty little peeks at itself in the mirror, but it was not until 1937 that it stopped long enough to get a reasonably full-length view, and—Narcissus-like—became fascinated with itself. The result was *A Star is Born* in which the motion picture took a public screen test and discovered its photogenic and box-office potentialities. The latter quality, particularly, impressed the movie moguls and there were soon forthcoming such introspective efforts as *It Happened in Hollywood*, *Super Sleuth*, *Pick a Star*, *Hollywood Cowboy*, *Ali Baba Goes to Town*, and *Stand-In*.

This bumper crop of cinematic autobiographies is for the most part on the lighter side, a prima facie indication that the cinema agrees with the George Jean Nathans in not taking itself seriously. It would appear that despite its corporate solidity, the motion picture still enjoys a playful romp and possesses a happy facility for publicly chucking itself under the chin. Who ever heard of such a comparable behemoth as the American Tel. and Tel. giving itself a neatly placed boot in the seat of the pants? Yet this is precisely





# retrospective

by Ezra Goodman

what the motion picture is doing. Either that, or it is feigning the slapstick posture in the interests of bigger and better grosses.

Perhaps this quizzical self-regard should be taken as an indication of a worldly maturity, but it is of interest to note that the motion picture was already being convulsed by itself in its infancy. One of the early Keystone comedies that Charlie Chaplin did for Mack Sennett was a highly irreverent slapstick diagnosis. This uninhibited opus, *The Film Johnny*, is set in a movie studio that is peopled with such birds of a feather as Chester Conklin, Fatty Arbuckle, Charlie Murray and Charlie Chase. Charlie (Chaplin) is vociferously instructed by the madly gesticulating director to make his dramatic entrance before the astonished eye of the grinding camera at the precise moment in the climactic scene when a 200 pound unmotivated brute is on the verge of throttling a sleeping infant in its crib. Charlie, of course, misses his cue, thereby precipitating a number of fast motion chases, pitched battles, free-for-alls, and skidding fests that ultimately involve the entire studio personnel for the greater part of a reel.

These early films of studio life were in all probability inspired by reasons of economy. In those blithe days before the advent of "prestige" pictures, swimming pools, and neurotic ingénues, films were budgeted at a few hundred dollars each, and one way of cutting down on this unheard of expense was to dispense with the sets. And what more simple method of accomplishing this than to use the studio itself (which, naturally, already existed) as the background for the action. All that was necessary in the way of environment was a movable wall, a few actors, a

cameraman cranking a dummy camera, and a pseudo-director. It is significant that directors in those days had not yet assumed the habiliments of cap and riding boots. Those knick-knacks came in later when the cinema went highbrow and began to budget its films in the thousands of dollars. To-day, when the expense account of a major film reads like the deficit of the United States government, the directors are again going bare-headed and bootless.

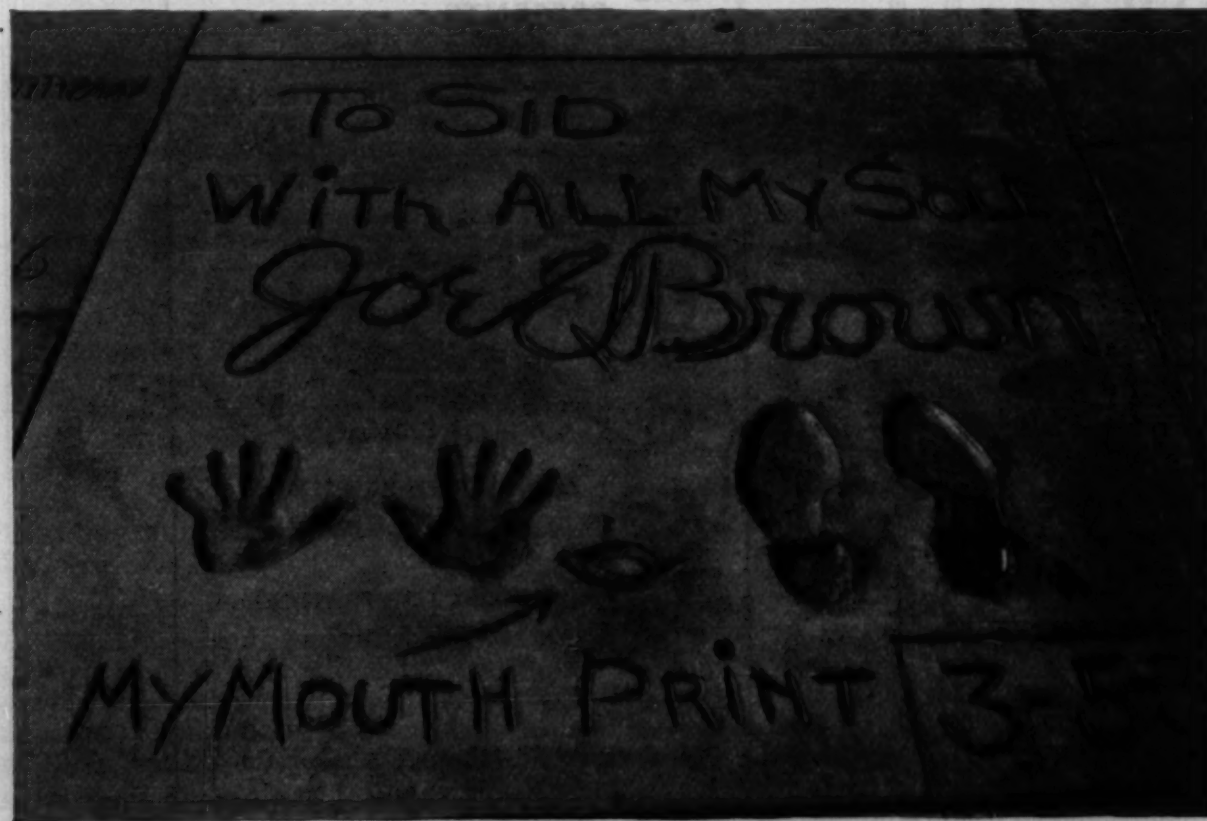
Motion pictures dealing with studio life continued to appear on and off for the next two decades. In 1923, for example, James Cruze directed a film, entitled appropriately enough *Hollywood*, and since then, that title with slight variations has served to identify most films purporting to hold a mirror up to the cinema. Paramount made its first version of the Harry Leon Wilson novel *Merton of the Movies* in 1924. One of the few films to deal with studio life in a more serious mood was *The Last Command* (1928) in which Emil Jannings was sentimentally seen as a small part player. Also about extras and bit-players was *The Life and Death of a Hollywood Extra*, directed by Robert Florey in 1929. More recently, besides the occasional routine productions, there have been adaptations of stage plays lampooning Hollywood, such as *Once in a Lifetime*, *Personal Appearance*, *Go West*, *Young Man*, and *Stage Door*, which was wisely stripped of its unreasoning tirade against Hollywood. And so the films went, until this year's deluge.

It is safe to say that the motion picture is the only art that has succeeded in dramatising itself. The secret of this success lies in the dis-

parity in technical equipment between the cinema and the other arts. The novelist, poet and dramatist compose their immortal works with a pen or pencil upon a pad of paper. Let us even charitably assume that they are equipped with a typewriter, or a dictaphone, nevertheless the entire external process of artistic creation is as uninspiring and undramatic as a man feeding his pet goldfish. Even the painter with his palette, the sculptor with his clay and the musician with his piano are not appreciably more enthralling. But the motion picture—ah! There one has huge spotlights, exciting streamlined cameras, traveling cranes, swinging microphones and other mechanical incidentals. There the process of creation is often more dramatic and awe-inspiring than the creation itself. The director of a grade C quickly, jauntily perched on the chariot-like platform of a zig-zagging dolly is a more immediately intriguing figure than the immortal Rembrandt of a Charles Laughton. Beside the godlike cameraman, dauntlessly winging his way through space beneath the arc lights on the back of a zooming crane, the dwarfed hero and heroine on the studio floor beneath pale into insignificance. In short, there is more drama being enacted behind the scenes than there is before them.

That all this technical and mechanical rigmarole, as well as the mortals who move about in its midst, are resplendent screen material is what the cinema has finally realised. A posing and posturing, to be sure, and a certain amount of gilding the lily are considered essential ingredients in the final product. And from the technical viewpoint alone, there is much that the cinema has yet to dish up, although it is improbable that any future revelations will come as a surprise to most moviegoers, what with all the confidential lowdowns syndicated from Hollywood daily. By now, every resident of that vast area between New York City and Hollywood which is known as the United States has probably been apprised of the fact that a filmic interior usually lacks at least the fourth wall and a ceiling, that the ocean liner sinking in mid-ocean is a miniature model in a studio tank, and that all is not what it seems to be, etc. It may well be that the feeling of superiority engendered in the spectator by "being in" on the illusion makes the entire business even more fascinating.

To date, the cinema's own approach to itself, as evident from its filmic output, has been either tenderly sentimental or irreverently slapstick. It now remains for the screen—if it must hold the mirror up to itself instead of to the world about it—to strike a balance between these exaggerations and give us, whether in the guise of comedy or drama, a more sober and sincere self-analysis. No doubt, this is asking too much of an art that has in large measure yet to receive a sober and unprejudiced analysis from both its creators, critics and the world at large.







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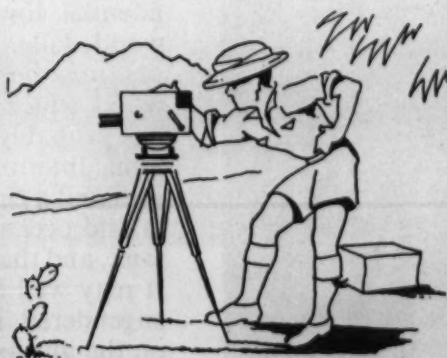
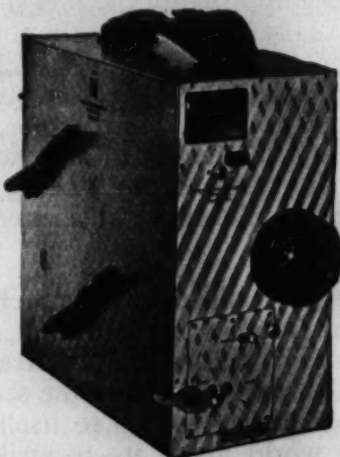
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JEAN RENOIR'S  
"LA GRANDE ILLUSION"  
(A)

G. M. HÖLLERING'S  
Hungarian Epic  
"HORTOBAGY"

DANIELE DARRIEUX in  
"MADEMOISELLE MAMERE"  
(A)

RAIMU & VICTOR FRANZEN in  
"LE ROI"

CINEMA

165 Oxford St.

Ger. 2981



# Where every NIGHT is Saturday AFTERNOON

An American visitor re-captures the excitement of early movie days with a British audience.



THE Saturday afternoons spent in a neighbourhood movie in Chicago watching the latest chapter of *Border Bandits* seem a long way off both in time and space. But if any nostalgic American wants to recapture the spirit of those exciting days of his childhood, let him visit some London cinema where most of the audience has just finished a day of dull labour. The audience is much older than the 8-11 it used to be in Chicago but not many other things have changed. The predominant tone of the occasion is still one of childlike excitement. Most of them are out toward the edge of their seats. There is even a little racing up and down the aisles and climbing over the seats to make it seem more like the old days. The audience in their seats are completely lost in the picture. Their faces brighten and darken with the changing moods of the film and vocal indications of anxiety are again heard when the hero is threatened. Courageous action is applauded by larger hands but just as enthusiastically. The movie once more becomes a live place.

A few things have changed. They're not eating pop-corn any more. Lyons's chocolates seem to have taken that place. Then too, none of the kids used to smoke. Now, half of them smoke and the other half cough. There isn't any Charleston contest either. That was one of the high spots of the afternoon when the fresh little girl over on the next block won a bicycle.

Allowing for these few differences, the London audience of workers resembles in a striking manner those juvenile audiences of another day and place. It must be the lack of apparent sophistication characterising both of them which makes them seem so much alike. Both of them seem to lose all contact with the outside world when they come in to

see a movie. Their reactions to what is placed before them are of the most elementary and unpretentious sort; they laugh hilariously at all the comic clichés and they are deeply moved by the ruthlessness of the stock villain; they relax when the heroine is rescued from disaster at a very late moment. They don't seem to be able to help giving themselves away like this.

American adult movie audiences are a good deal different from this. By the time individuals have come into a theatre and taken their seats they are swallowed up by the rest of the expressionless audience. Each one seems to have lost all distinguishing traits. He sits, for the most part, in stony unresponsiveness to the film. Changes in the fortunes of the hero work no changes on him. When he sees that justice has made a spectacular victory he doesn't even think of applauding. When the picture is over he gets up and leaves with the same dead-pan expression that he is apt to have retained all through the show.

THERE is one small group in America which retains some of the characteristics of the English working-class audience, but it is becoming affected by the stupefying influence which has made itself felt by most American audiences. Examples of this disappearing American type can be found especially in Middle-Western and Southern cities. These cities usually have a section devoted to the street sale of farm produce. The farmers from the area surrounding the city bring their goods in for sale and stay in the city all day. There are ordinarily several small movie houses near the markets and their audiences consist largely of farm-hands. A Western picture is almost always the rule. This agrarian audience seems to have definite ideas about what ought to happen in Western pictures. Shouts

of disapproval, warning, derision, encouragement, and enthusiasm are delivered at appropriate times. But there isn't much moving around in the seats. Almost all the activity is vocal, coming from persons slouched down rather far in their seats. There is a complete absence of nervous tension but an observer still gets the feeling that the members of the audience are participating strenuously in the action of the picture. Their's is not quite the uninhibited kind of movie-watching that enlivens so many English cinemas.

From every point of view the English audiences are to be preferred. They carry the cinema's attempt to create an illusion of reality much closer to success. Seeing a film as a member of the sort of English audience that we have been talking about has a peculiarly vitalising effect. In fact, it can even make a mediocre film look pretty good. But this does not stop the audience from disapproving audibly of films or sequences which it thinks to be on the corny side. The mass of American audiences might profitably acquire this habit of vocal disapproval. The Bronx cheer is being woefully neglected in the general neighbourhood of its origin.

To-day in London the lousy guy isn't throwing the good guy down the mountain (to be continued next Saturday) but Basil Rathbone is beating hell out of little Freddie and half the audience seems to be on the verge of going up and hanging one on the big bully. It won't be Chapter VII of *Border Bandits* that we'll see next week but whatever it is there will be plenty of excitement in the stalls. For this preservation, in its pure form, of the art of watching a movie, England will receive the gratitude of millions of Americans. It's a great country where every night is Saturday afternoon.



IN the last twelve months there have been well over a hundred feature programmes broadcast nationally by the B.B.C. At least a dozen writers and producers are fully employed in editing, composing and presenting them. Even so, it is probably still necessary to define this type of programme before discussing it in a paper with a popular as well as a professional appeal.

It is often easier to give negative rather than positive definitions of compositions created for new media of communication, such as broadcasting or the cinema. Thus, by the process of elimination, a documentary film becomes a picture which is not obviously a drama, musical, newsreel or cartoon. Similarly, the radio feature becomes a programme which is not recognisably a play, talk, concert, variety entertainment, news bulletin or outside broadcast. It is true that some features verge on the play, while others are little more than talks. But most of them are distinct from either, inasmuch as they attempt to present life dramatically, in objective rather than subjective terms. In this respect they are "unpopular" in so far as the majority of listeners, like the majority of picture-goers, still prefer drama in the classical terms of a story with plot and characters, to a sequence of sound pictures illustrating, no matter how dramatically, an impersonal theme.

Nevertheless, there are two good reasons why features and documentaries should be growing in public appreciation. First, a technical reason: both exploit a fundamental characteristic of their respective media, namely the capacity to *record* life in a way that none of the older media, such as the theatre or print, have been able to do. Secondly, an historical reason: both tend to rely for their subject matter on the collective rather than the personal aspects of contemporary life. These are large claims, which are sadly belied by many of the feature programmes broadcast. But they are the chief factors which gave birth to features, and account ultimately for the relatively high output of them at the present time.

The development of feature programmes falls roughly into three periods, of which the third is not yet complete. The first from 1928 to 1932 was one of experiment, chiefly in forms. It was carried out by a small number of producers whom the B.B.C. encouraged to follow their inclinations. As might be expected, the results were highly individual in treatment and generally "literary" in subject matter. The early "mosaics"—pastiche of verse and music; radio fantasies such as *Yes and Back again*; anthology programmes such as *Chinese Moon Party* were typical products of this period, which had considerable aesthetic, but little popular, appeal. The phase might have lasted much longer than it did had it not been for the B.B.C.'s policy of commemorating public occasions with special programmes. As it was, feature producers were compelled to turn their attention to subjects suitable for treatment on popular occasions, in short popular subjects. Immediately two strands appeared in the development of feature programmes, the "literary" type were joined



## The Radio Records Life

B.B.C.'s feature broadcasts need the  
reporter's approach and the artist's  
treatment

says E. A. HARDING

Chief Instructor, Staff Training Dept. at the B.B.C.

by what have since come to be known as the reconstructed actuality.

For a time both developed side by side. The public were treated to examples of one or the other according to the nature of the occasion. Thus, Armistice Day was commemorated with elaborate pastiche elegies, invocations and evocations, such as *In Memoriam* (1930, revived in 1937) and *Resurgam* (in 1932), while Empire Day and New Year's Eve provoked radio panoramas, posters in sound, sequences, etc., which culminated in the first great Empire hook-up *All the World Over*, broadcast on Christmas Day, 1932.

Up to this point, the development of these two types of feature had been fairly level

and had been carried out for the most part by the same producers, Messrs. Gielgud, Sieveking and myself. Then, as often happens in the history of a mechanical medium, the introduction of a new technical device, namely, a suitable method of recording for broadcasting, and later the recording van, caused an upheaval, in which the romantic or literary feature and the realistic or actuality feature became divorced. Even the producers separated for a time into two camps. One group, the "journalists", represented by Laurence Gilliam and later by Larry Morrow, went hareing—in the recording van—after "actuality" at all costs; and produced a series of radio documentaries ranging from *Gale Warning* and *Scotland Yard* to *Opping*



'*Oliday* and *Trinity House*. The other group, the "artists", represented by Felix Felton and D. G. Bridson, virtually "went North" and settled down to the production of large scale literary features ranging from radio biographies, such as *Coleridge* and *de Quincey* to the verse drama *The March of the '45*.

It must be understood that members of each group made excursions into the territory of the other; especially Felton, who has a long list of actuality shows to his credit. The point is that the technique of literary and actuality production had become separated to the detriment more particularly of the latter.

This, very roughly speaking, was the situation in 1936. It was not a very satisfactory one. The brilliant presentation of the literary features was a perpetual criticism of the feeble presentation of the actuality features, while the popular material of the actualities was a perpetual reminder of the restricted appeal of the literaries. It seemed necessary to reunite art and actuality in the way that art and reconstructed (studio) actuality had been united before the split.

The first step was taken in the *Harry Hopeful* programmes from the North. In these, "actuality", in the shape of shepherds, farmers, parsons and publicans, was brought into the studio and subjected to the rigours of strict "art" production. The result was astonishingly satisfactory. The programmes were praised both for their spontaneity and slickness, a significant combination, partly due, I suspect, to the temporary elimination of that "nigger in the woodpile", the recording van.

Since then the process of uniting art and actuality has gone on steadily, if with varying success. Recent examples have been: Gilliam's *Summer over London*, Bridson's *Steel*, Felton's *A Century of Steam*, Moray McLaren's *Dr. Johnson of Lichfield*, Francis Dillon's *Summer over the West*, John Gough's *Tobermory Treasure*, Rowland Hughes's *Summer over Wales* and *Roman Wall* by W. H. Auden and John Pudney. In all of these programmes, the tendency has been to use "actuality" as a unit of composition in formal structures of prose, verse and music, sometimes original, sometimes—to coin a word—pastiched. How the "actuality" is obtained, whether "live" in the studio or "potted" by the recording van, is becoming less important. What is important is that where the structure has grown out of the "actuality," the result is usually effective; where the "actuality" has been merely stuck on to the structure—to give it "reality", there is a sense of dislocation.

Listeners only enjoy recognising themselves—"actuality"—when they are interpreted with imaginative truth. The feature producer's problem this year, as all the time, is to achieve such interpretation with or without recording vans. What he requires is the reporter's approach to material and the artist's treatment of it.

The picture at the head of this article shows the B.B.C. Recording Van at the Padstow May Day.

# EXPERIMENTAL HOUR

## Val Gielgud's feature criticised by George Audit

VAL GIELGUD'S Experimental Hour is an established feature in radio programmes. It has now given us a dramatised version of *The Waste Land*, and two items from the Columbia Workshop of America, McLeish's *Fall of the City* and *St. Louis Blues*. These programmes have more than justified their productions and I am still wondering why they were not broadcast sooner, in the ordinary programme schedules. Where, in fact, does the "experiment" come in?

When the series started up Mr. Gielgud told us to look out for items that might shock sensitive people, but that had, nevertheless, technical qualities to recommend them. He may have been saying that, just to entice the curious to listen to his programmes, for we have not yet heard anything to make anybody's ears burn.

It is in their shape and style that these experimental items are worth noticing. In *The Fall of the City* the scene is the Square in the city where the people have gathered to discuss the threatened arrival of a Dictator. The suggestion of a Greek city-state is emphasised by the arrival of runners who inform the crowd of the dictator's imminence, while orators, soldiers and senators harangue the people with conflicting advice. From a vantage point a commentator describes this scene to the microphone in colloquial verse. Climax comes with the arrival of the dictator who is described by the horrified commentator as clad in shining armour but with no face under the visor.

McLeish has put a modern political situation in an ancient setting, with classical unities of time and space, and described it in modern racy verse. Which just proves: that a political situation makes a good plot (good); that verse can provide a good medium for radio (known already from the success of Shakespeare and Bridson); and that most B.B.C. commentators are pretty tame compared with McLeish's (excellent).

In January Mr. Bridson produced *The Waste Land*. The poet's voice and Tiresias's were spoken by Robert Farquharson. All the dialogue was given to suitable voices. Music was specially written for preludes and linking passages. There was restrained use of wind and thunder effects. The pub scene "When Lil's husband got demobbed", and the clerk-typist seduction scene were perfect "radio". The "Mrs. Porter song" was put to the tune of the Charlie Chaplin original. A nightingale record accompanied the appropriate reference. The "Song of the Thames-daughters" was put to music and accompanied by a mandoline. In the last section, "What the Thunder Said", the words got all the effect themselves, and a little use of the echo-room was practically the only addition.

Before and after the performance Freddy Grisewood and Michael Roberts gave a sort of Clapham and Dwyer commentary on it. The idea was good but Roberts, who was supposed to be defending the production, was more interested in crabbing it by trifling criticisms.

The real problem in producing any great poem as long as *The Waste Land* is the extreme concentration of meaning. Once you dramatise the thing your actors must speak the lines at the normal tempo associated with the character of the part, and that generally means racing over lines that a reader would want to dwell on. On the other hand, a dramatisation like Mr. Bridson's does help one to see the poem as a whole (and incidentally *The Waste Land* is a magnificent example of unity to those feature producers who have been criticised here and by their own listening panel for being "too scrappy and disjointed" in production). And the listener who has not got to fasten his eyes on to lines of type can give freer vent to his imagination.

Wondering whether I was alone in liking *The Waste Land* I called on half a dozen or more people in the poorer quarters of my town. From their comments I reproduce the following.

Housewife (young, elementary school education): I'd never heard of the play before but I liked it. I didn't understand it all and I didn't see much connection between some of the parts. But some of the voices were beautiful, especially the men's. There were some good descriptions of London. It sounded a very high type of poetry.

Platelayer (middle-aged): Well, frankly it didn't appeal to me very much although I don't profess to be much of a judge—of shows like that. My boy heard it and liked it. Seemed a bit depressing to me though I liked the bit in the pub.

Clerk (young): Yes, I liked *The Waste Land*. I had never read it before and haven't read any poetry since I left school. Of course there was quite a lot of it I didn't understand but I got the general sense of it. I thought the music helped it and the conversational pieces came over best. Considering there was no action I thought it came over very well.

I am told by scientists that the most important part of any experiment is the close study of its phenomena after it is completed and the drawing up of approximate conclusions. Mr. Gielgud seems to be killing his rabbit only to leave it lying unobserved until it rots. The least he can do is to invite listeners' criticisms and to announce the result of the enquiry as soon as possible after every programme. Last year's listening panel had to listen to forty-seven productions before the B.B.C. issued a short announcement on the general opinions.

The Columbia Workshop of Irving Reis has a better name. It suggests a place where you overhear plays in the making, where productions are pulled to pieces and put together again by unusual and daring experiments. I should like to hear from Mr. Gielgud's Hour an experiment in different speech forms. I should like some extracts from Joyce's *Ulysses*, an example of modern realism from Russia, and contrasted with this, some Pirandello. Why not give us something new in humour and more fantasy, which is peculiarly suited to the medium of radio?



IT certainly needed the viperish pen of Ben Hecht to show all the crazy comedies which way they ought to have been going. *Nothing Sacred* lives up to its title with savagery worthy of *Volpone*. It smacks the public's face with an ironical wet-fish which I am rather afraid the public may object to, especially as there is not a single character in the story (with the possible exception of the hero) who isn't a slug, or, as the drunken and dishonest doctor in the film puts it, "Even if the hand of God reached down into the mire it couldn't raise them to the lowest depths of degradation—No Sir! not by a million miles". Take first the brilliant and simple dirtiness of the story. A New York paper gets wind of a dear little girl at Warsaw, Vermont, who is dying of radium poisoning. The reporter they send persuades her to come and spend her last days being feted by New York as the World's Heroine, and although she has just been told that the whole thing was a false alarm, she accepts, and departs for the big city with her doctor. Then the ballyhoo, the slush, the personal appearance at the night-clubs (together with "Tootsies of all Nations" as advertised), the reporter's half-realisation of the unpleasantness of the whole affair (especially as he has fallen in love with her), the near discovery, the attempt at the fake suicide, the real exposure, and the final disappearance before the fake funeral organised by the paper.

It would be unfair to reveal any more of the gorgeous ramifications of the plot or the glitteringly successful gags which adorn every single scene in the film. It should be enough to say that the big moment is not the much advertised socking-match between March and Lombard; the big moment occurs every few seconds when another Hecht gag explodes rudely in your defenceless face. Savage, ironical, comic, witty, the film rushes along at full speed and never trips up at any point. If it is a triumph for Hecht it is also a triumph for William Wellman and for the entire cast, including March, Lombard, Winninger, Connolly, and the beautiful man who plays the tough newsboy with a brudder called Mo.

And finally, how gratifying it is to see Technicolour coming into its own. The garish hues emphasise very cunningly the poisonous unreality of the lower life of a great city; and it looks as though someone, having seen the point, arranged for certain emphasis in this direction. There are at any rate plenty of the sourest colour clashes which contrast with the fine shots of the stately skyscrapers of New York from the air: they, it seems are pure and dignified; it is only the men who built them who are little and vain and silly—but also funny. Take a notebook with you, for you will want to remember a lot of the gags.

MANY of the critical boys (and girls) have been going on at Hitchcock for some years now with demands that he should take things more seriously, should use his undoubted talent in films which attack the more vital problems of British life, should concentrate less on the isolated incident and more

on the complete and coherent scenario. Meantime Hitchcock has gaily produced *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, *The Secret Agent*, and *Sabotage*, the last-named being easily the best so far. So, putting aside the influential intervention of the 'Observer's' film critic, who (sez she) succeeded in preventing any repetition of scenes like those in *Sabotage* where the small boy is blown to bits in an omnibus, it would appear that Hitchcock intends to stay put. Why not? Why all this solicitude from the Higher Critics? Do they fuss themselves about the soul of a de Mille or a Lubitsch? Are there anguished bleatings over the *weltanschauung* of Tay Garnett or Leo McCarey?

No, Sir; not a word is heard until perchance a darling director produces a really bad film, and that is something Hitchcock has not done for at least four years. I suggest therefore that we should accept the Hitchcock genre for what it is, and criticise accordingly. True, his rating on the general roster of big names will probably suffer in the long run through his self-decided limitations of thought and script, and even to-day he should perhaps be rated a little below the angels (or dub him Lucifer if you will); but the fact remains that *Young and Innocent* offers more good clean fun and really refreshing entertainment than any film since Christmas.

The story is a useful string for the Hitchcock beads. A nice young man (Derrick de Marney—going to be a good screen actor) is accused falsely but on particularly nasty circumstantial evidence, of murder. He gives the local police the slip, is befriended by the Chief Constable's adolescent daughter (Nova Pilbeam—good-looking, gauche and effective) and together they chase the countryside in search of a raincoat-belt—the only proof of innocence—with the police force in hot pursuit and the Chief Constable (Percy Marmont—bless him) worrying his head off at home. The chase leads through rustic England, onto railway sidings, to a tramp's doss-house, a lorry-driver's pull-in, an upper-class children's birthday party, the liverish horrors of a seaside hotel complete with tea-dance, and a deserted mine, where an aged Morris Cowley makes an impressive exit through an earth subsidence. There is also a dog.

There it is . . . rows and rows of neat little incidents, well-scripted, intelligently shot, smartly edited, and all rounded off in the best Hitchcock style. The female screams on the beach, and the seagulls whirl at us on her gesture. The discarded teacup punctures the Rolls. There is also a satisfactory attention to details of sound—intimate background noises which most directors never bother about, but which are worth their weight in gold. Plenty of humour, a certain amount of wit, and endless thrills. Exteriors present a sunny country or the menace of a rustic railway station at night. Interiors are convincing, ingenious and economically designed.

As a mystery story the thing is not very effective; in fact it seems doubtful whether the murder could have been committed at all under the circumstances established, and



## WHO CARES?

**NOTHING SACRED**, a United Artists Film, directed by William Wellman, with Carole Lombard, Fredric March, Charles Winninger, Walter Connolly, Sig Ruman, Frank Fay, and Maxie Rosenblum.

**YOUNG AND INNOCENT**, a Gaumont British film, directed by Alfred Hitchcock, with Nova Pilbeam, and Derrick de Marney.

*Reviewed by Basil Wright*

the appearance of the murderer as a drummer in a jazz-band seems a little arbitrary; so for that matter is the exceedingly trying truck-shot right across the room onto a close-up of his eyes, which discovers him for the audience, but not for the actors, and ruins the suspense values of the long scene which follows; after all, it's the last quarter of an hour of the film and we know he's got to be caught; and it's action we want, not the cat-and-mouse act. Still, one feels inclined to see the film a second time just for the fun of it, and to take a second look at some of the ingenuities, to say nothing of Hitchcock himself, who has given himself a much larger part than usual; he must be on the screen for fully thirty seconds.





# SANYWAY?

**MANNEQUIN**, a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer film, directed by Frank Borzage, with Joan Crawford, Spencer Tracy, Alan Curtis, and Ralph Morgan.

**THE BUCCANEER**, a Paramount film, directed by Cecil B. de Mille, with Fredric March and Franciska Gaal.

**THE AWFUL TRUTH**, a Columbia film, directed by Leo McCarey, with Irene Dunne, Cary Grant, Ralph Bellamy, Robert Allen, Cecil Cunningham, and Alexander D'Arcy.

*Reviewed by Marion Fraser*

*But tell me Mr. Slobberygub  
Are you prepared to work for me?*

This is not the theme song of *Mannequin*, the new Joan Crawford picture, but it should be.

The film might have contributed towards the breaking down of stupid domestic traditions if it had remained logical. The tradition in question being the one about the woman's place in the home, men working and women weeping and such.

Joan starts off on the wrong foot by being the sole support of her family. Father and brother won't work. Mother has spent a life time trying to prove that the female is the weaker sex, but tells her daughter on the side

that this is a lot of nonsense, for where has it got her? In concrete terms it has got her into a squalid apartment where she does the cooking (chiefly potatoes with the jackets off, for Paw likes them that way). Joan, however, is bemused by a handsome chap and wishes to marry him so that she may live in a more stylish way. She does so and finds herself supplying his bread ticket. This she is prepared to put up with for she is in love and also she is in possession of a more stylish apartment. But unfortunately the swine wants more than just a bread ticket and announces that she can use her good looks to provide the necessary extras. Joan is, of course, revolted and walks out. No more will she have to do with men. She will stand (emotionally and economically) on her own two feet.

Enter Spencer Tracy with all his toughness, but also a sad look on his face. He falls in love with the lady, and although she does not love him, the sad look is too much, and she marries him to get it off her mind. Incidentally, he is a rich man which is all to the good. He is decent too, and prepared to work. That makes it all logical. Or does it?

Tracy has aged a little in this picture and lost much of his bluster. The movies have decided to give him personal charm and ask him to exert it. This is a little disappointing for the Tracy fans, I am afraid. However, he is still good.

On the whole, *Mannequin* is not a bad shillingsworth for it gives you Crawford in all her glory—and a bathing costume. It takes you to London and Paris and a love-nest-for-two in Ould Ireland. And Spencer Tracy is in it which makes a lot of difference. But I am still afraid it is a very illogical film.

**THE BUCCANEER** has Fredric March and the War of 1812 in it. It has hordes of buccaneers and the British marching into battle in a fog of gun smoke and also it has the scuttling of a ship and the spectacle of a little Dutch girl walking the plank. With all this it should be real Cecil B. de Mille, but unfortunately all these things do not hang very convincingly together. And either it is not good Cecil B. or else we have become too sophisticated for him.

Among the buccaneers are many familiar figures we have seen gripping holsters in the bar-rooms of the Wild West. And, for the sake of these old friends and the grand tradition of scoundrels, it is worth going to the Carlton. Fredric March does another Bothwell-in-kilts act, and gives the impression of being well upholstered by the property department. He works very hard, but he does not make a good Victor McLaglen.

There are several sequences in the film that strike the de Mille note, the best of them when the British attack General Jackson's army and get quietly and tidily mown down. The scenes are reminiscent of old military prints and make war look like the dignified affair history books tell of. There is also the sequence when the buccaneers on their private island, are attacked by a Southern ship and the cannon-shot hits boats and water and men, and Fredric March rushes down the beach clutching an American flag bawling "We are your friends. Do not shoot",

over and over again, while the guns make an infernal noise and the ship is too far away in any case for his shouting to be heard. This scene is Cecil de Mille doing his big stuff and he might have gotten away with it if Fredric March had been a bit huskier and a lot more oafish-looking than he is.

Be prepared, however, for Franciska Gaal. Please remember Lillian Gish and all the sweet silly heroines we accepted for the love interest. And don't judge too harshly. Franciska is the little heroine who sticks by the buccaneers and sews buttons on their shirts and follows them to war riding on a gun in an officer's uniform, much, much too big for her. She is a vivacious little thing with cunning, mischievous, little ways. Only she's grown up and says so, mind you, in just the so many ways that you have observed a million times in the movies. And this time it makes you sick at the stummick too.

**HOLLYWOOD** has developed the art of the domestic comedy to a high state of perfection. This type has its origin in slapstick but the weapons are words, not custard pies. They take a good deal of clever acting and clever direction and although they are unpretentious, to my mind they top most other Hollywood product bar Disney.

The latest is *The Awful Truth* with Irene Dunne and Cary Grant and, more important, directed by Leo McCarey. The plot is nothing and the situations are banal. It follows the course, quarrel, divorce, reconciliation. But among the ingredients the raising powder is the important thing and out of the oven comes a frothy bit of stuff that leaves no taste in the mouth and is easy on the stomach.

Irene Dunne has taken on a mantle similar to Myrna Loy's but Cary Grant is a new person altogether. He manages to be sophisticated, jealous, in love and a likeable clown all at the same time. He gets away with situations that have been played a hundred times and gives them the freshness of novelty.

The moral to this tale is that it seems the plot is not the important thing, it is the treatment, the twist or maybe just that the director and the players feel the same way about a script and the camera catches on. It is certainly not just luck for it has happened a number of times the past two years.

These films are not important but I think they are the sort of thing we go to the movies hoping to see. They offer a vision of release from the daily round and tempt one to believe that frivolity, zest, fun and clever repartee can be the body of life as it is lived (we hope).

*Mr. John Grierson will resume his  
monthly reviews of new films in the  
next number of World Film News.*



# The MONTH'S RELEASES

Among the films released for showing in the provinces and suburbs, two are of especial merit: *Stage Door*, with Katharine Hepburn, Ginger Rogers and Adolphe Menjou, and *The Toast of New York*, with Cary Grant, Edward Arnold and Frances Farmer.

*Stage Door* is set in a New York theatrical boarding-house for girls, and succeeds in conveying something of the disappointments and struggles of these girls, and the tough, wise-cracking defences they erect to conceal the hardness of their struggles. Hepburn has the great acting part, but it is Ginger Rogers who carries off the acting honours with a surprisingly good performance. Adolphe Menjou turns out an amusing performance as the hard-boiled theatrical producer. Capably directed, with slick dialogue and good acting.

*The Toast of New York* is a fictionalised version of the life and times of Jim Fisk, a notorious stock promoter. It glimpses the dramatic struggle between three of the strongest individual figures that ever aspired to leadership of the American financial scene—Daniel Drew, Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt and Jim Fisk. A vigorous,



"Ginger Rogers . . carries off the honours"

and at times exciting, panorama of incident and crisis with a fine performance by Edward Arnold in the role of Jim Fisk.

The two comedy releases of the month—*The Awful Truth*, with Cary Grant and Irene Dunne, and *Ali Baba Goes to Town* with Eddie Cantor, are dealt with more fully on other pages in this issue. In spite of the attempted satire in the latter film, which fails and which in any case is of little interest to British audiences, there are some good numbers and enough of the old Eddie Cantor to make this worth the seeing.

*100 Men and a Girl* has been so highly praised by all the critics and achieved such a long West End run that it is hardly necessary to list its outstanding qualities. The hundred men are unemployed symphony orchestra musicians whom Miss Durbin organises and manages. To get a contract the orchestra needs a big-name conductor and Miss Durbin goes after and gets Stokowski. The film has attracted great interest because of its able handling of the music scenes. The cast has Adolphe Menjou, Alice Brady and Eugene Pallette as well as the popular Deanna Durbin.

*The Prisoner of Zenda* is a new version of an old favourite, featuring Ronald Colman, Made-

leine Carroll and Douglas Fairbanks junior. Those who remember its last film appearance in the old silent days will perhaps find this version a trifle disappointing: certainly it lacks something of the dash and vigour one has learnt to associate with the title-piece. Douglas Fairbanks celebrates his return to Hollywood with a first class piece of romantic villainy.

*Back in Circulation* is a fast-moving, fast-talking newspaper story, with a few fresh twists and turns, and a girl for the star-reporter. Good performances by Pat O'Brien and Joan Blondell and plenty of action and good, crackling dialogue make this a welcome addition to a long line of films about newspaper sensationalism. *Artists and Models* is an outstanding parade of music-hall talent, kept a little better in hand than usual, with plenty of comedy, spectacle and novelty and a cast that includes Martha Raye, Jack Benny, Richard Arlen and Ida Lupino.

Martha Raye also appears in the latest Bing Crosby film, *Double or Nothing*. Crosby's crooning is as pleasant as ever, but once again he carries a weak story, more noticeable than usual because he croons almost every time he appears. *The Bride Wore Red* is about a girl who sings for a living in an Italian waterfront café. To prove his point that one person is as good as another a Count installs her for two weeks at a high-class mountain resort, gives her good clothes and so on and introduces her to his friends. After an interval he exposes the girl, who is thrown over by the wealthy young man she has caught on to, and finally finds romance in the arms of the village postman. Amid the toils of this fantastic, footling story Franchot Tone, Joan Crawford, Robert Young and Reginald Owen try hard to make the whole thing seem credible and worth while.

Among the releases likely to be included as second features and worth noting are: *Charlie Chan on Broadway*, the latest and one of the best of the Chinese sleuth series, full of the light and heavy comedy and the spurts of action for which this series is justly famed; *Brief Ecstasy*, with Paul Lukas; *The Man Who Cried Wolf*, with Lewis Stone; and, on the lighter side, *Big Shot*, with Guy Kibbee; and *You Live and Learn*, with Glenda Farrell.



"A first class romantic villain"

## Stage Door (RKO-Radio)

**DIRECTOR:** Gregory La Cava  
**STARRING:** Katharine Hepburn  
Ginger Rogers  
Adolphe Menjou

## Toast of New York (RKO-Radio)

**DIRECTOR:** Rowland V. Lee  
**STARRING:** Edward Arnold  
Cary Grant  
Frances Farmer

## The Awful Truth (Columbia)

**DIRECTOR:** Leo McCarey  
**STARRING:** Irene Dunne  
Cary Grant  
Ralph Bellamy

## Ali Baba Goes to Town (20th Century-Fox)

**DIRECTOR:** David Butler  
**STARRING:** Eddie Cantor  
Roland Young  
June Lang

## 100 Men and a Girl (Universal)

**DIRECTOR:** Henry Koster  
**STARRING:** Deanna Durbin  
Adolphe Menjou  
Eugene Pallette

## The Prisoner of Zenda (United Artists)

**DIRECTOR:** John Cromwell  
**STARRING:** Ronald Colman  
Madeleine Carroll  
Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.

## Back in Circulation (Warner Bros.)

**DIRECTOR:** Ray Enright  
**STARRING:** Pat O'Brien  
Joan Blondell  
Margaret Lindsay

## Artists and Models (Paramount)

**DIRECTOR:** Raoul Walsh  
**STARRING:** Jack Benny  
Ida Lupino

## The Bride Wore Red (M.G.M.)

**DIRECTOR:** Dorothy Arzner  
**STARRING:** Joan Crawford  
Franchot Tone  
Robert Young

## Charlie Chan on Broadway (20th Century-Fox)

**DIRECTOR:** Eugene Forde  
**STARRING:** Warner Oland  
Keye Luke  
Joan Marsh

## Brief Ecstasy (A.B.F.D.)

**DIRECTOR:** Edmond Greville  
**STARRING:** Paul Lukas  
Linden Travers

## You Live and Learn (Warner Bros.)

**DIRECTOR:** Arthur Woods  
**STARRING:** Glenda Farrell  
Claude Hulbert

## Double or Nothing (Paramount)

**DIRECTOR:** Theodore Reed  
**STARRING:** Bing Crosby  
Martha Raye  
Andy Divine  
Mary Carlisle

*Note: "The Life of Emile Zola" and "They Won't Forget" originally announced for February release are now scheduled for release early this month. These, the two outstanding films of 1937, should on no account be missed by any of our readers.*



**P**ARADING Mr. Roosevelt's economic surecures through a crazy Arabian Nights' land sounds like a great idea for rich movie satire, but it never had a chance. The plan of satire, by which Eddie Cantor and Twentieth Century-Fox, who made *Ali Baba Goes to Town*, hoped to reach new heights of barbed hilarity, was to drop a funny little man into the middle of a strange community, which was labouring over familiar problems in its own peculiar way. The little man would tell them that they ought to look to Mr. Roosevelt's methods for a solution of their social and economic ills.

From there Twentieth Century-Fox *et al.* thought it would be easy. Just take an assortment of features of Mr. Roosevelt's plans and practices for revamping American capitalism—more equitable distribution of wealth, a big programme of public works, jobs for all the unemployed, new sources of tax revenues—and put them into exaggerated and abbreviated operation in Eddie Cantor's Bagdad. These plans often look funny enough anyhow when just ripped out of their context, but set them in an exotic background and they ought to be uproarious. This is the goal which seems to have been set for the satirical portions of *Ali Baba Goes to Town*.

The nervousness of the American movie manufacturers over the possibility of Mr. Roosevelt's turning on them next in his fitful anti-monopoly drive might have had something to do with their failure to achieve the goal they set for themselves. But it would be a mistake to blame the class struggle or any aspect of it for the failure of *Ali Baba Goes to Town* to achieve the satiric heights which the idea behind it promises. It is much more likely a case of a good idea having got into mediocre hands.

When Eddie Cantor was working for Florenz Ziegfeld as the funny little sort of nit-witted man who could put a song over wonderfully well and throw in some engaging steps, he occupied a very appropriate place in the American entertainment field. But when he started selling coffee on Sunday nights over a coast-to-coast hook-up, and began to think of himself as the people's pal, one who brought the serious happenings of the day to the firesides with a laugh, his limitations became too obvious. When he started singing his patter songs about nonsensical ways of curing the depression, they should have been funny, but they weren't. It was probably because a comedian or a writer has to be very good before he can make people laugh about their troubles. The voters can be made to laugh at the news but Eddie Cantor couldn't do it.

It seems that Cantor has never realized how far short he kept falling of being funny in his topical skits because he has carried his same abortive radio technique over to his latest film. When he takes the New Deal public works programme, the financial policy, the work relief programme, and other varied features and transplants them to what he calls Bagdad, the fun should begin. Certainly Mr. Roosevelt and his helpers have made enough mistakes in the last five years to serve as rich material for an explosive satire. But what happens? We are presented with a string of stale New Deal jokes that have been

# ALI BABA Goes to TOWN

***Eddie Cantor would like to be taken seriously but just pretend you don't hear him when he talks that way and maybe he'll get over it.***



*Ali Baba Goes to Town* (20th Century Fox)

kicking around the variety stages for the last couple of years or have been appearing in various forms in the Republican press. It is true that the fellow who says them this time wears a turban but otherwise there isn't any difference in that "building the bridge in the wrong place" story. One shouldn't object just because stories are old, but it seems that stories should be selected that don't show the wear so badly.

**I**F this picture was really an attempt at satire, its main failure was that the story never got to the point where it could support itself. When the New Deal had been set down in Bagdad it should have been possible just to let things happen. But what you get instead is this string of stale gags that have already been objected to. One does not grow out of the other. There is the feeling that Cantor has been handed a gag and a couple of hundred feet of film to get the audience in stitches over it. His eyes, his hands, and his tone of voice are all up there trying to extract a community guffaw at something that falls far short of the histrionic effort put into it. When one gag is finished another soon appears. The process is repeated with quite unconvincing results. The plan of letting the story go a little way, and then turning on the "satire", seems to have been followed.

Eddie Cantor and his friends must have thought that they could do a satire of the New Deal without stepping on anyone's toes. All they actually did was make a few feeble jabs at spots that are rather unimportant and which are now in the public fatigue zone. The result of this from the point of view of satire is something very anæmic and something which would have no effect on the blood-pressure of the most ardent Jacksonian Democrat. For the benefit of any who might have wondered, it should be stated that America has not at this time added to the Swift, Voltaire, Gilbert list. There may still be hope, but not from the little man with the banjo eyes.

What one really hopes, of course, is that the film never was intended as a satire. It is plain that it wasn't constructed with only that thwarted end in mind. Mr. Zanuck or somebody was going to be perfectly sure that the film would not stray far from the tried and true Hollywood prescription for success. So we find plenty of singing and dancing running through the film, and, incidentally, as nice a version of "Twilight in Turkey" as you are apt to stumble on in several days' travel. There is a rhythmic negro trio and a tap dancer who would stand out in any crowd.

The whole film is so good natured that you have to acknowledge a certain enjoyment after having seen it. It's the old Hollywood buckshot technique and it seems to have worked satisfactorily again. Sell it as a New Deal satire and grab plenty of publicity in the Republican press; give them some good old Eddie Cantor personality; throw in a beautiful tenor and a blonde; and fill up the rest with songs and dances.

Eddie Cantor would like very much to be taken seriously, but just pretend you don't hear him when he talks that way, and maybe he'll get over it.



# REVIEW OF REVIEWS

## ***Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs***

(Walt Disney—R.K.O. Radio)

The question which everybody must have asked in advance about Walt Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was whether it would justify its length. Not only was the film to be many times longer than anything Mr. Disney had done; it was to tell a story which he could be imagined as telling in the accustomed time. A fairy tale like an anecdote is by definition brief, and its form helps its content to be credible. We can believe three things that are done in three paragraphs when one of them alone, drawn out to epic length, would be preposterous. The question then was whether Mr. Disney had lost any of his secrets by abandoning his form.

The fact that everybody likes *Snow White* is not necessarily an answer, though it has its importance. Thousands are trampling one another to see it; but the question still is whether the good thing they are there to see could possibly be better. I am not sure that it could, and yet in view of the future which the film opens up I am sure that the matter should be argued. Mr. Disney has both expanded his story and contracted it. He has added animals; he has differentiated and named the dwarfs; and he has elaborated the wicked stepmother in her role as magician, giving her a laboratory with monster retorts and a long-legged raven to scowl in the corner. On the other hand he has suppressed two of her attempts on Snow White's life—the tight lacing and the poisoned comb—and he has stopped short of Snow White's wedding. The wedding is perhaps not missed, but my guess is that the queen should have had more things to do and less time in which to do them. She was the only one of Mr. Disney's creatures who even approached being tiresome.

Mr. Disney's other developments are all to the good, and indescribably delightful. The animals, for instance—I can remember no finer moment in any film than this one when at sunrise in the forest the banks of eyes which have looked so sinister all night turn out to belong to rabbits, fawns, chipmunks, bluebirds, and turtles. The transition is from shadowy evil to the clearest and most blithesome benevolence. The antics of these charming beasts vary henceforth between the beatific and the absurd; the pride of the baby bluebird in his voice, the ticklish turtle offering his belly for a washboard when Snow White starts housecleaning for the dwarfs, and the squirrels undoing cobwebs with their tails are but understatements of the very touching love for Snow White which they share with a helpless audience. Then there are the dwarfs—in their seven foolish ways as irresistible as the heroine, and of course no less devoted to her than the animals are; though one of them, Grumpy, remains a misogynist almost to the end. Mr. Disney's triumph with them, like all his other triumphs, is one of understanding. His technique, about which I know little, must of course be wonder-

Edited by

H. E. BLYTH



Wallace Beery and Dennis O'Keefe

ful; but the main thing is that he lives somewhere near the human centre and knows innumerable truths that cannot be taught. That is why his ideas look like inspirations, and why he can be good-hearted without being sentimental, can be ridiculous without being fatuous. With him, as with any first-rate artist, we feel that we are in good hands; we can trust him with our hearts and wits.

—Mark Van Doren, *The Nation*

## ***The Bad Man of Brimstone***

(J. Walter Ruben—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)  
Wallace Beery, Dennis O'Keefe, Virginia Bruce.

Mr. Wallace Beery here represents, with his usual accomplished ferocity, an unspeakably bad man of the Wild West. There is no kind of robbery or murder that he will not commit, and what is worse, and surely contrary to the tradition of Wild Western stories, he is altogether lacking in the spirit of sportsmanship; when the young hero points a gun at him he suggests that it is more honourable to use fists, and then himself draws two pistols. But it will be no surprise to the student of American fiction to learn that throughout the film he is constantly in tears, and that he meets his appointed end with all the ecstasy that is expected of martyrs. Finding his long-lost son, he follows him about with dog-like affection, helping him by stealth and grateful for the smallest recognition in return. Since the young man has all the sentiments proper to a hero and turns both policeman and lawyer in an attempt to bring law and order to the West, the situation is rather amusing, and, indeed, the whole film has a certain ironic detachment which makes it possible to enjoy even its most preposterous episodes. The film is burlesque melodrama, but the burlesque is an unscrupulous method of making the melodrama palatable to modern tastes.

—*The Times*

I always enjoy Wallace Beery. He plays bad men so well and enjoys himself so hugely in his wicked ways. No one can shoot to kill with such gusto or with such a beatific smile. When, in *The Bad Man of Brimstone* he finds himself faced with his own son, whom he deserted as an infant, and who has been brought up in God-fearing fashion by his sainted mother, ignorant of his father's identity, when he is hunted by that son exercising his official duty as Federal Marshal, you can imagine the western complications that ensue. What more can the film-goer who loves saloons and triggers, bandits and hold-ups, and the reform of the community wish for in a picture?

—Sydney W. Carroll, *The Sunday Times*

### *Critical Summary.*

In spite of some critics' regrets that "*The Bad Man of Brimstone*" was not filmed on the playing fields of Eton, and that Wallace Beery does not play a straight bat, we judge this action-filled western to be a good picture. It is, in fact, in direct line with the westerns of Bill Hart's kind and day, and provides more satisfying and enjoyable entertainment than the whole pack of recent indoor inconsequentials.



## Rosalie

(W. S. Van Dyke—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)  
Eleanor Powell, Nelson Eddy.

These two-hour musical confections are a little overlong for my personal palate. Their redemption is gorgeous staging. An American Army cadet, in Mr. Eddy's fine vocal person, flies the Atlantic from the football field to woo Miss Powell, who, with her tap-dancing genius, is princess of a mythical royal house. (They all pronounce it "princis".) Most of the story is sheer padding, and I listened patiently but vainly for a witty line. Laughter is exclusively provided by Frank Morgan's always acceptable incoherence as a nervous monarch. An official comedian, Ray Bolger, struck me as dismally unfunny. Garnished with music by Cole Porter, Tchaikovsky and Sousa, the picture has numerous mass human formations, with a local fiesta on a scale to make Ziegfeld swoon.

—P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

Deploying its formidable phalanxes of talent—stars, composers, set designers, dance directors, make-up people, script writers, dialogists, orchestras and chorus people—in one of the most pretentious demonstrations of sheer mass and weight since the last Navy games, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer brings forth nothing more impressive than another musical film called *Rosalie*. In it Eleanor Powell tap dances in black silk stockings among sets entirely divorced from reality, Nelson Eddy sings as well and as inopportune as could be imagined, and expensive secondary people try to compensate with personal mannerisms for all the bright things the dialogue and action fail to say or do. All this is not to deny to *Rosalie* the purely economic distinction of being a great deal of show for the money; it is, in fact, too much show, except possibly for those who love sets and costumes, Mr. Eddy and Miss Powell for their own sweet sakes. In sheer length, breadth, weight and thickness, it is wearying, and even if all of it were good (which it isn't) still, there might be some point in protesting at such an unholy surfeit.

—B.R.C., *The New York Times*

### Critical Summary.

The move towards longer films, lasting two hours or more, which reached its climax with "The Great Ziegfeld", cannot be said to have been altogether successful. In the theatre there are intervals to allow a breathing space from concentration, but this is not so in the cinema, though one recalls that "David Copperfield" was shown in two parts during its first London run, and there have been other instances as well. A picture full of varied action and incident, such as "Mutiny on the Bounty", does not begin to pall after two hours, but a musical nearly always does, and it is significant that several long musicals have not been as successful as was confidently predicted—"The Firefly", for example, despite many excellent notices, did not prove the attraction that was expected, and this was almost certainly due to its length. Most significant move of all towards longer pictures is, of course, Walt Disney's, but Disney has always been a law unto himself.

## W.F.N. Selection.

*Nothing Sacred* \* \*

*The Bad Man of Brimstone* \*

*Something to Sing About* \*

*La Belle Equipe* \*

## Other Films covered in this Issue

*The Buccaneer*

*Mannequin*

*The Awful Truth*

*Young and Innocent*

*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*  
(Stars reserved)

*Dinner at the Ritz*

*Rosalie*

*Man Proof*

*Tovarich*

*Every Day's a Holiday*

*Young Pushkin*

## Man Proof

(Richard Thorpe—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)  
Myrna Loy, Rosalind Russell, Franchot Tone.

Everybody is handsome, beautiful, and well-dressed, if not quite bright, in *Man Proof*. The talk is all of love, love, love. Nothing new is revealed, however. The ladies here don't go in for poetry. They are the brisk, fashionable species, and express sorrow simply by passing out at bars. Myrna Loy and Rosalind Russell are busy with an exhibition of such passions as jealousy, disillusionment, triumph, and awakening of love, as one might expect in a story that has delighted readers of the "Ladies' Home Journal". Scenes include a wedding, a prize fight, a newspaper office, those bars, of course, suburban cottages, and costly apartments. Walter Pidgeon and Franchot Tone have a good deal to say themselves throughout, but the ladies seemed to me the best of the talkers. Tireless heroines, each with a nobility of motive that is impressive.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

Four authors were concerned in this story, which suggests that they were in hopes of achieving an effect of some sort that has eluded them. So imposing a parade of stars can hardly have been intended to convey so little. The affair has a certain slickness but, as none of the characters is worth a serious thought, even these star performers have to exercise all their quality to keep one's interest alive. Some of the dialogue is smart, though it runs over-much along the talking in images groove. Still, Miss Loy, tight and sober, Miss Russell, happy and broken-hearted, Mr. Tone, terse but faithful, and Mr. Pidgeon, good-looking but shallow, afford in combination a tolerable flow of rippling entertainment.

—A. T. Borthwick, *The News Chronicle*

### Critical Summary.

Hollywood's bright young things have always been a trial on the screen, but when they become introspective and philosophical, and throw off airy generalisations on Life and Love, the wise man reaches for his hat and looks for the nearest exit—or preferably the bar. The screen adaption of "Man Proof" appears to have been the result of communal effort, and this we may readily believe since it is hard to imagine that any one man could have contrived so circular an effort, for dialogue and situation revolve like a puppy chasing its tail.

## Tovarich

(Anatol Litvak—Warner Brothers.)

Claudette Colbert, Charles Boyer, Melville Cooper, Isobel Jeans, Basil Rathbone, Anita Louise.

Gay, sparkling, and tender, this has more than enough brilliance to over-ride that American accent that creeps in here and there.

If I say it is full of charm I don't want you to think I imply anything precious or sugary. Its post-revolution topsy-turvydoms are the sort of things that might have happened, and here they are presented so persuasively that for the time being you laugh and glow comfortably in the feeling that they really did.

Warner Brothers paid £35,000 for the film rights of this play. They have afforded it some fine settings (including one that is said to have cost £25,000 to build), but the price has not intimidated them into overcharging its atmosphere. *Tovarich* is a thoroughly enjoyable show.

—A. T. Borthwick, *The News Chronicle*

I have a suspicion that *Tovarich*, poor comrade, is getting weaker minute by minute. The play in town was nice, but one did hear a great deal about how it had been abroad, and now the movie comes, and it hardly amounts to much more than a mere show for Claudette Colbert. That is being a little mean, for Miss Colbert has her own way with her, though it's not much the way a Russian princess who had been ukased out of house and home; and Charles Boyer ambles through it in a fair temper; and Basil Rathbone adds a nice note. The comedy, however, of Russian royalties glad to get a job as servants in a Paris household is clearly Americanised into simple homespun humour such as we all grew up with.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*



## Young and Innocent

(Alfred Hitchcock—Gaumont British.)  
Nova Pilbeam, Derrick de Marney.

For the first time in one of his pictures, the crime is secondary to a warm human interest. It's melodrama, but somehow cosy, too. Hitchcock himself blames me for his change of heart. He was pained, it seems, by my comments on his last picture, *Sabotage*, in which he blew up a schoolboy in a bus, with a time bomb.

If he likes to attribute *Young and Innocent* to me, he may, and I shall be delighted. For I like it best of all his pictures. It may not be, academically speaking, the cleverest. The adepts who go to a Hitchcock film to grub out bits of montage may be disappointed. Except for a few neat little things, it is not what I should call a tricky picture. There is no sequence in it so memorable as the knife scene in *Blackmail*, or the bit with Peter Lorre's death in *The Man Who Knew Too Much*. But it is exciting, and ingenious enough to satisfy any normally intelligent person, and it has something which I have missed so far from all the brilliant row of Hitchcock's pictures, and that is humanity.

The real charm of the film is its eye for human values. Hitchcock seems to know, with a certainty that has sometimes evaded him, what is important and what is immaterial to a person in certain circumstances, just how far emotion can affect behaviour, just the look or the word or the withdrawal that can send bonnets flying over the windmill.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

One of the many things I like about Alfred Hitchcock's work is its efficient modesty, its lack of strain or over-statement. It is common in films to try to give every picture an air of greatness. Now this is neither possible, truthful, nor desirable. Every time we sit down to read a book we don't expect a classic. We all like magazine stories. And Hitchcock never tries to pretend his short story is a "Gone With the Wind". If you like a film that has a beginning, a middle, and an end, that is shaped like a piece of carving and has the clean economical lines of a sculpture, you will relish every minute of *Young and Innocent*. Even if you don't care much about such things and just want to be thrilled, amused, stimulated, and always held, you are bound to like it, too.

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

### Critical Summary.

A prominent American critic wrote recently that he and many others considered Alfred Hitchcock to be the best living director, and that is a notable compliment indeed. Apart from his wonderful flare for creating and maintaining suspense and his masterful eye for detail, Hitchcock is unique amongst British directors, because he has a genuine understanding of the man in the street—him to whom a famous judge once referred as "the man on the Clapham omnibus". Too many English directors seem never to have travelled on the Clapham omnibus, or, if they have, they are now doing their utmost to forget this unfortunate contact with the proletariat.

## Something to Sing About

(Victor Schertzinger—Grand National).

Because James Cagney is in it, *Something to Sing About* has something to sing about.

Cagney, in my opinion, is one of the few, perhaps half a dozen, real screen artists of America. He will never, I am sure, be a popular darling. He has no striking charms. He has grace, but it is invested in a short, stocky figure. He has humour, but his face is square and homely. He has a curious delicacy, almost a refinement, of gesture, but his parts call mainly for fighting and slugging. He is too small for authority, too tough for sympathy, and too honest for heroics. He's just an actor. Like Spencer Tracy and Gary Cooper, and few other men that I know on the American screen, he can incarnate a human being straight, without "character", without make-up, and without mugging.

In the present film he plays a danceband leader who goes to Hollywood to become a film star. He becomes a film star. He doesn't like it. Who, with wit, would? He flies back to New York, and takes up his old job as band leader. That, oddly enough, seems to satisfy him. The film suffers from an under-plus of Cagney. What Cagney there is, is fine.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

Not much to write home about. Without James Cagney, perky and versatile as a dance band leader who goes to Hollywood, it would be pretty poor stuff.

Some of the burlesques of film-land's "grooming" are fun.

A bogus story of his marriage, put out for publicity purposes,

causes the most mechanical lovers' misunderstanding I years.

ney carries is a great

and I am glad he is returning to the fold of Warner Brothers with the prospect of better pictures than this.

—P. L. Mannon, *Daily Herald*

### Critical Summary.

A second-rate film, with an undistinguished story, that is saved by a delightful performance by Cagney. His artistry was never more evident than in this film, for the whole film depends on it, and he gives as delightful a piece of fooling as we are likely to see for a long time. His dancing can only be described as an Astaire number done in the style of the sixpenny hop, a jeering, good-natured parody that is better than the best dancing. One number, with a tramp steamer for a setting and the crew for a dance team and band, is a great knockabout version of the Astaire performance in "Follow the Fleet" with a slapstick finish that rounds it off perfectly. A star for James Cagney's performance.

## Every Day's a Holiday

(Edward Sutherland—Paramount.)

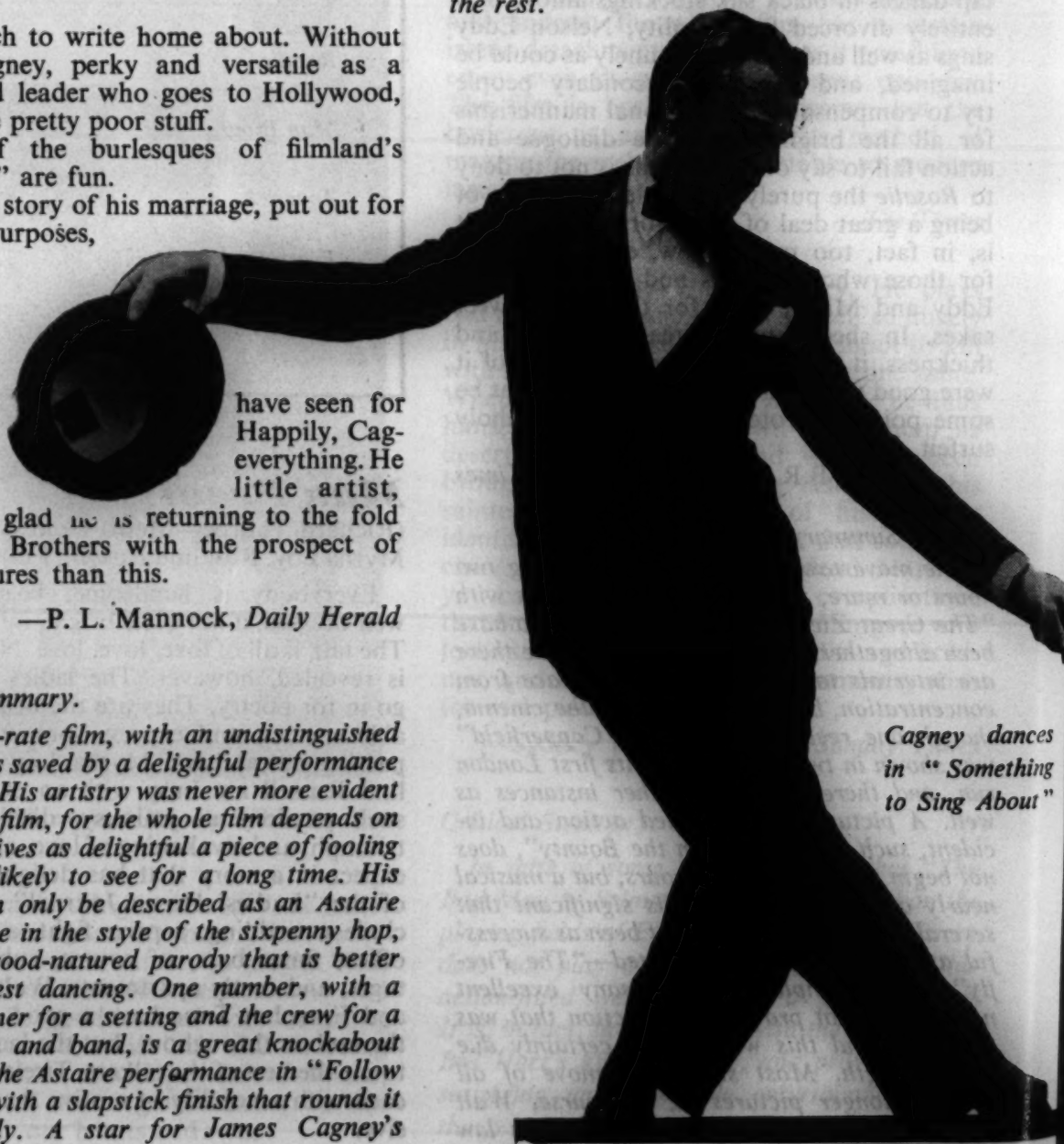
Mae West, Edmund Lowe, Charles Butterworth, Charles Winninger, Walter Catlett.

The title might almost be a forecast of Miss West's screen future, if this is the best she can do. The film, in which the woman with the swinging hips is a sort of crook (an incredible sort), is rather on the dull side. It is set in the beginning of the century (as old fashioned as Mae's curves), so that all the characters perambulate in quaint clothes that have no place in entertainment now except burlesque. The story is even more upholstered than the costumes of the period. It is, in fact, a kind of padded cell. Incidentally, Miss West has given up her innuendoes and has almost run out of wisecracks. The few she has fizzle like damp squibs.

—Richard Haestier, *The Star*

### Critical Summary.

It seems only yesterday that we first encountered Mae West, swaggering into a nightclub in a George Raft picture while the cloak-room attendant's eyes grew wide with wonder. Looking back now, it seems strange that this plump little woman with the ample curves should have thus triumphed in a stream-lined age; perhaps the more elderly filmgoers saw in her the last of the dying tradition of the Victorian Music Hall. But the novelty has worn off, and the Hays organisation has done the rest.



Cagney dances in "Something to Sing About"



## Dinner at the Ritz

(Harold D. Schuster—New World.)

Annabella, Paul Lukas, David Niven, Romney Brent, Stewart Rome, Francis L. Sullivan.

Annabella has gone to Hollywood to play opposite William Powell and her last British-made film, *Dinner at the Ritz*, is, I think, the best of the three she has done for New World. This is a light comedy with occasional thrills provided by Paul Lukas, as a gunman baron, and Francis L. Sullivan as the head crook. Annabella is the daughter of a Paris banker who gets shot as the solvency of his bank is threatened. His blonde daughter vows to track down the murderer and so she puts on a black wig and goes to Monte Carlo, where she gets employed as a jewellery saleswoman. The long and eventful chase ends at the Ritz with honour satisfied and romance in the air. The formula of *Dinner at the Ritz* has been used before, but there is enough originality in the telling to make it pleasant entertainment.

—Ian Coster, *The Evening Standard*

A well-bred little melodrama, mannerly and subdued, *Dinner at the Ritz* deserves at least your polite attention—by which we mean that you should not yawn too openly if you must yawn at all. Produced by Twentieth Century-Fox's British subsidiary, New World studios, it moves with Old World decorum and occasional touches of gout. Yet it has its virtues, and a polite decision would be that it is, on the whole, a rather agreeable entertainment in its quiet British way. Having the sort of muddling-through narrative that does not reduce easily, we had best let the plot go as a multi-angled campaign against a nefarious French capitalist (Francis L. Sullivan).

If you can picture Mr. Lukas playing a gunman, you can imagine how proper and stately the really nice people in the cast must be. Annabella, it is true, is a bit livelier than the rest, but we do wish she had not let herself be inveigled into that brunette wig for her masquerade as a Spanish marchesa. She looked—and it hurts to say this—like a dowdy Dolores del Rio. Mr. Sullivan, we might add, gets his just desserts and takes them as philosophically as the cast must have taken its tea every afternoon at 4, while the picture was being made. There was actually one scene where we thought we detected a crumpet crumb on Mr. Niven's collar.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

## Nothing Sacred

(William Wellman—United Artists.)

Fredric March, Carole Lombard.)

People who can contemplate without turning a hair the most agonising scenes of sporting or military cruelty are protesting right and left at the savage irreverence of *Nothing Sacred*: it makes fun, they say, of death. It does no such thing: it ridicules the exploitation of morbid sentimentality. I wonder what the objectors to *Nothing Sacred* would make of *Volpone*: there is more than a slight resemblance between the scarifying play at the Westminster and the scarifying movie at the Pavilion. *Volpone*, feigning illness, is encircled by a mob of avaricious toadies. Hazel Flagg, supposed to be dying from radium poisoning,

is instantly pounced upon by the gutter press: "What is that girl thinking? What is she feeling? A million readers will want to know." A reporter, like a carrion crow, tracks her down in an uncivilised outpost of New England and transports her to New York, where she is to be the centre of a gigantic publicity stunt—official welcome from the Mayor, freedom of the city, a slap-up time while she lasts, a slap-up funeral when she gives out. If the girl were really dying, there would be some reason for squeamishness; but we are told at the outset that there is nothing whatever wrong with her: she only accepts the rôle of doomed heroine because she would do anything to escape from her dead-alive home.

This admirable comic situation is developed with verve, resource and irony. O rare Ben Hecht! He has done brilliant work for the cinema before, but he never struck a richer vein than this. *Nothing Sacred* contains a succession of acidly satirical sketches: the all-in wrestling match at which the announcer, discovering Hazel Flagg's presence, asks the audience to observe ten seconds silence, while the spotlight is trained on her and the cameras flash; the raucous chorus of hideous children who salute her at dawn with doggerel verse to the tune of "John Brown's Body"; the spectacular cabaret show, with its pageant of Mounted Heroines of History (Catherine the Great, Lady Godiva, Pocahontas) culminating in the personal appearance of the "greatest little heroine of all time." The little heroine, thoroughly enjoying herself and overdoing the champagne, passes out, and the sensation is redoubled: Death (the gloating crowd supposes) is approaching to claim his Helpless Victim; who knows, perhaps they have had the luck to be in at the kill.

The direction of William Wellman translates Hecht's script into excellent cinema, and the acting is superb. Carole Lombard has a touch of comic genius, and Fredric March's reporter is authentic. As the editor, Walter Connolly's mean look and explosive manner are magnificent: it is a joy to watch his distress when Hazel shows no signs of getting worse, his simmering wrath when the doctors pronounce her quite healthy, his pious gratitude when he hears she has pneumonia. There is certainly something Jonsonian about this actor. The ending hardly equals the rest of the film: of course, the reporter falls in love with the girl. Ideally, she should have repulsed and disowned him; it would have been pleasant to see the hard-bitten news-hound gradually turning soft as butter before the charm and (supposed) courage of the girl, while the influence of New York made her steadily nastier and tougher. Instead we were treated to scenes of knockabout bedroom fisticuffs between the pair, pandering, I suppose, to a universal but suppressed desire among males to knock the female out. And why was there no funeral? But I don't grumble; it will be a long time, I fear, before we see another film so adult and so diverting.

—Peter Galway, *New Statesman*

## La Belle Équipe

(Julien Duvivier—French.)

Jean Gabin, Charles Vanel, Vivienne Romance, Micheline Chirei.

*La Belle Équipe* is a Duvivier film, and that

is equivalent these days to saying a Van Gogh or a Gauguin. It isn't quite an authentic Duvivier, because somebody, for reasons best known to himself, has seen fit to insist on a happy ending. The original film, as the director conceived it, was the story of five good comrades who pooled their winnings in a lottery to build and equip a road-house by a river. They loved it, they worked for it, but fate took them off, one after the other, like the ten little nigger boys, until the opening day found *Chez Nous* chez nobody. The tender heart of Somebody has shrunk from the last catastrophe. In the present version two of the brotherhood are left to join, with the ghosts of the others, in the inaugural celebrations. One doesn't believe it—the cards are stacked too obviously another way—but let's be sensible, one is moved by the film in spite of it. Right up to the final compromise the piece is so winningly, so cunningly, a bit of real Duvivier; by turns dramatic, tender, cynical, and just plain moving, so that it sneaks right into your heart and stays there. I suppose that is what happened to Somebody. Well, I don't altogether blame him. After ninety minutes of M. Jean Gabin's company I felt a sentimental urge myself to cheat the scenarist, and switch round the ending from tragedy to compromise, so that M. Gabin at least might get his modest dream, and live.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

### Critical Summary.

This is the year of blessing for the French motion picture makers. They have hit their pace, lengthened their stride. They are turning out film of quality and quantity. While René Clair, most original of the Gallic film creators, makes an exile's compromises in England, a whole slew of directors, some talented in other directions, but most of them no match for René Clair, are finding capital, and a whole slew of producers are finding profits in native films. But I should make clear that there are few masterpieces here. There are no "Winter-sets"; if there is a "Lower Depths", it is matched by "Dead End". Actually, most French films are "good" because in technique and in simple entertainment value they have caught up with Hollywood. There are no subject cycles, as in the States. There is no farce cycle, no gangster cycle, no musical cycle at all. The French strive rather for variety in their films; this may be due to the production structure. Instead of a few huge companies, there are hosts of small producers, each trying to break through with something striking. The most important selling point about a French picture is not the star name but the ensemble idea of the production—the story and the director compete for first attention. Apart from Pagnol, no director seems to have a distinct genre. Though Duvivier, in an interview, said French films were really "much closer to the people" than were American films, and that he wished to occupy himself with social problems, I could find no example of that in his current films, and little of social content in all the current French films. There is one exception—Jean Renoir, who consistently makes important films of real social content; he may really give national expression, in cinema, to the French people.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*



# COCK A

Written by

## FILM CRITIC PROBE

*W.F.N.*'s quest for the Average Film Critic has ended in a fiasco. We mean, we actually found one.

According to our analysis the A.F.C. stands four-foot eleven in his suede shoes, weighs ten stone wet through, has one shirt and three-and-a-half stock phrases. Under the watchful eye of Mrs. Panting, the *W.F.N.* Crochet Correspondent, the Average Film Critic was taken to a newspaper office, a trade show, a public house, a lynching, a folk-dance festival, a public-house and an inquest.

Asked his reaction to so many strange sights, the A.F.C. finished sucking the free *W.F.N.* orange and said: "Of course it was all *ever* so exciting, but I shan't be sorry to get back to my little place in the country. With his sheep and his cows a man can feel at home. What I enjoyed most was the trade show—one meets such a nice class of people. I still think that fourpence is too much to pay for a cigar."

At this juncture the A.F.C.'s wife caught him a sharp crack in the puss with her free copy of *World Film News*. That meant an orange for *her*. We saw them off from the corner of the street. "Good-bye," we said, "and *do* forget to write." And turning on our heel, we made our way dejectedly back to the office, feeling that something had gone out of our life.

As, indeed, it had.

## Can you Spell Anything Funny here?

The following team has been selected to represent the Film Industry against a team of Lady Tree-Surgeons in the *W.F.N.* Spelling Bee to be held on Putney Common next Wednesday:—

S. Goldwyn.  
J. Bernerd.  
S. (Snooks) Grieser.  
Lord Strabolgi.  
James Douglas.  
F. Bartholomew (Capt.).  
I. Ostrer.  
T. Farr.

The Dagenham Girl Pipers.

A gong will be sounded each time a mistake is made, and residents in the district are advised to get out into the country that afternoon if they want any peace and quiet.

The winning team will meet a picked side of Covent Garden porters in the Final at Wembley Stadium in April. We must apologise to the assistant-producer who sent in his name as a contestant under the impression that he was entering for a smelling-bee. Sorry, we spelt it wrong on the handbills.

## Purely Personal

A very windy  
Kind of a shindy  
Is *The Hurricane*.  
But then, it's Amurricane.

Women fall  
For Jon Hall.  
All the more so  
On account of his torso.  
Kindly hand us  
The chest expanders.

There seems to be some disparity  
Between the views on vulgarity  
Possessed  
By the Censor and Mae West.

If by chance  
I were teamed to dance  
With Eleanor Powell  
I would throw in the towell.

I soon get weery  
Of Wallace Beery.

Charles Boyer  
Is getting coyer.

If I were Fred MacMurray  
I shouldn't wurray.

Dorothy Lamour  
Has plenty of allour.

I find Pat O'Brien  
Rather trien.

If Ginger Rogers  
Took in lodgers  
I  
Would apply.

Grace Moore  
Is inclined to roore.  
Still, she gets plenty of dough for it,  
And a lot of people go for it.

I could do with more  
Of Eric Blore.

## TECHNICAL HITCH

*Sir Harry Lauder has strong views on broadcasting technique, and he is the only man the B.B.C.'s engineers allow to play about with the microphone. On one occasion he demanded that a wet blanket should be wrapped round the mike.*—News Item.

And when he looked again, guess who those nice engineers had wrapped around the mike? Why, nobody else but your old friend, Sir J\*h\* R\*i\*h!

## ARABIAN NUTS

*Last night the Arabic-speaking audiences listening to the third of the special programmes on the short-wave broadcasts from Daventry were introduced to modern English dance music played by Carroll Gibbons, and European folk-tunes.*

"Little Old Lady" and "Roses in December" were among the tunes played.

—News Item

In the oasis  
There are a lot of strained faces.  
They are trying to remember  
"Roses in December."

While behind the mosque where it's shady,  
The girls are putting in a little close harmony on "Little Old Lady."

And when the boy-friend, Ali,  
(A name that corresponds to the British "Charlie")

Asks them how they are  
And says he is on his way to the bazaar  
And how would they like him to buy them  
some new ribbons,  
They decline—having fallen for Gibbons.

Or try this one on the desert air . . .

Forget your old hookah  
And don't be a sookah,  
It's time that you took a  
Few lessons in swing.  
Hitch up your burnouses  
(That's Arab for trooses)  
And hear Harry Whoosis  
From Birmingham, Eng.

Come Abdul, come Ali,  
For "Dinah" and "Sally"  
And all Tin Pan Alley  
Are crowding your air.  
Would you not have preferred an  
Annoyance less "murdern"  
For the White Man's Worst Burden  
You've now got to share.

## SAYINGS

"An English picture, even though it has Miss Bennett in the cast, or Mickey Mouse, or some other star, is not comparable with pictures made and sold in the United States."—Judge Burnell.

"Girls! You must have Mystery!"—Myrna Loy.

"I have a new respect for film stars; I am inclined to think they earn the fabulous salaries they receive."—The Bishop of Chelmsford.

"I wouldn't do anything to hurt religion. I go to church myself."—Mae West.

"I lack what is now known as glamour."—Edward Everett Horton.



# ALORUM

by Rodney Hobson

## SPRING MANŒUVRES

*Glamour-Sergeant Eve is preparing to answer the Call to Charms.*

*Down in Hampshire she is seductively mobilising to Get That Man—for the Hampshire Heavy Brigade of the Territorial Army.*

*Inspirer of this campaign is the Colonel commanding the Fixed Defences, Southern Command. He went to the Brigade's prize-distribution, cast a thoughtful eye over the bevy of wives, sweethearts and girl-friends, and straightway promised the commanding officer a cheque for the girl who got the most recruits for the unit during the year.*

*"Everyone knows what a subtle influence the ladies have," said the shrewed and gallant colonel.*  
—News Item

I myself, as fine a figure of a man as you're likely to set eyes on in a month of "Hurricanes", have already been approached by one of these fair recruiters.

I was sitting in a milk bar, moodily sipping my *agitation de lait* (milk shake to you, Mr. Goldwyn) when I felt a light touch on my arm. My hand flew instinctively to my wallet and I swung round, to find myself gazing into the smouldering eyes of La Belle \* \* \*. I doffed my *demitasse* with mock courtesy.

"La Belle \* \* \*?" I asked, although the mask she was wearing and the brace of horse-pistols thrust in her belt made the question superfluous.

She nodded curtly.

"Monsieur Alphonse Faute de Mieux?" she throbbed back at me.

I nodded even more curtly.

La Belle \* \* \* twined a slim finger in the lapel of my frock-coat. "The Fifth Loamshires and I," she said softly, "have need of you."

I flushed hotly beneath my London tan.

"Let's leave the Fifth Loamshires out of this," I said with some asperity.

Miss \* \* \* quickly ordered some more asperity, with a dash of vanilla.

"The Loamshires," she said, looking at me over the rim of her glass, "are below strength."

"Perhaps they are not eating the right kind of food," I said, with that twisted smile that has made me a *succès fou* in half the *salon bars* of the native quarter.

La Belle \* \* \* tapped me archly on the wrist with her shooting-stick.

"Plenty of good, wholesome food, fun and football," she whispered coaxingly, "and as nice a lot of lads as you could wish to meet in a day's march." She took a pace back to watch the effect of her words.

I sat for a moment in silence. The picture she had painted was indeed a glowing one, and I, headstrong young fool that I was, felt my resistance slipping from me. I crushed a straw in my strong brown hands and spoke.

"M'mselle," I said, and my voice was hoarse with some emotion I could not put a name to, "I am ready to be measured for my mess-jacket."

My fair companion smiled cryptically; then, drawing a sheet of perfumed notepaper from her bandolier, she scribbled a few words upon it and handed it to me.

"Give this to Colonel Bloodstock," she said simply. "Tell him that the Darling of the Regiment sent you."

Then she motioned her pressgang of old Gaiety Girls nearer and I allowed myself to be bound hand and foot with blue baby-ribbon. Then a paper forage-cap was thrust on my head and I was led out, followed by cheers and an attendant with the bill.

And that, kiddies, is how I come to be sitting at my desk in this steaming outpost on the North-West Frontier. Every now and then the Colonel's little daughter looks roguishly in at the opening of my tent, only to flee as fast as her plump little legs can carry her as I playfully toss a hand-grenade at her. And here comes the Colonel now across the *veldt*, picking up litter and empty cigarette packages on the end of his sword as he comes. If the old buzzard wants to borrow my electric razor to trim his dam' camel, he's going to be unlucky. *Nemo me impune lacrossestick.*

## Attention, Horse Lovers!

*If the House of Lords has its way every horse in the country will have an undocked tail to keep the flies from tormenting it in summer.*

*By 55 votes against 20 the House gave a second reading to the Docking and Nicking of Horses (Prohibition) Bill, which forbids the docking and nicking of horses and importation of docked and nicked horses.—News Item.*

As inveterate old Dockers and Nickers ourselves, we should like to see introduced a Docking and Nicking of Film Producers Bill, compelling all producers to carry a small portable tail or switch to prevent the flies from settling on them all the year round.

The actual process of nicking—cutting the tail muscles, bandaging and holding in position with mechanical devices—has, of course, been prevalent in the Industry for some years.

"SAY, WHO IS THIS AURORA BOREALIS DAME? WHY AIN'T WE SIGNED HER UP?"



"What's on at the Grand to-night?"



# BOOK REVIEWS

## How to Write and Sell Film Stories

by Frances Marion (John Miles, 12s. 6d.)

From time to time books appear purporting to tell the novice and the established writer how to write stories for the screen. They appear with such regularity because screen writing offers the most lucrative rewards to the writer, yet while the writers are most voluminous on structure and method, they supply remarkably little data on the selling of the stories once written. *How to Write and Sell Film Stories* by Frances Marion is no exception. The beginner is told that if he sends his manuscript to the movie makers it is bound to come back marked "Returned unopened". Three ways are suggested of marketing stories. First, "If you know a studio executive, producer or star who will take your story to the story editor or submit it with a note vouching for your responsibility and integrity, you may be sure it will receive a careful reading." Second, "... to get work in any capacity at a studio and, when you have been accepted as a trustworthy person, to offer your stories direct to the story editor." Neither of these two ways of getting screen stories read can be adopted by more than a very small number of people and Miss Marion's third and last advice is to use an established agent. This aspect of Miss Marion's book is considered first because it is on this aspect that the book is sold according to the publisher's "blurb".

In point of fact, very few stories are bought as originals from unknown authors and the studios keep a very sharp eye on all other methods of literary expression, so that if your story is published in a magazine there is as much chance of selling it as if it were sent to the studios. This aspect of the book is unimportant, but as a whole the book ranks high in film literature. Miss Frances Marion is entitled to all honour as the most consistently successful story writer for the screen, to be ranked with the legendary names of Grover Whalen, Charles MacArthur, William Slavens McNutt and Ben Hecht. She has been in the industry for twenty years, since the days in fact when it became an industry. For years she has been the mainstay of Metro's story department, a few of her pictures being *Big House*, *Camille*, *Dinner at Eight*, *The Champ*, *Min and Bill*; a steady output of box-office pictures. She is reputed to be the highest paid story writer in the business.

The book reveals Miss Marion to be a craftsman in the best sense, a person to whom film is a living article and a person who finds the fashioning of that article an art. As an analysis of movie structure this is a book for film technicians, particularly in this country. After discussing producers' general requirements she deals with each of the following topics, giving a chapter to each: characterisation; plots; the form of the film story; the theme and its essentials; dialogue and its special uses; atmosphere, pace and suspense; the effective presentation of emotional reactions. While the book is written from a materialist point of view and is packed with common sense matters, there is a chapter pompously called "Dramaturgy", which, though slightly faltering, is the nearest exposition of the film as an art that

has yet been published, *pace* the highbrows. The aim is perhaps unconscious, but because Miss Marion has both feet on the ground and because of script-like marshalling of facts, one begins to believe that the lumps of celluloid one has been playing with might be an art form. The highbrow jongleurs who theorise on cinema have never thought as deeply as this Hollywood writer at whom they have so often sneered.

As literary work the book is undistinguished, Miss Marion is a woman of facts and not a stringer of sentences. At the same time the book is studded with that conscious literary culture that began with Washington Irving and Emerson, and finds expression to-day in the works of Maxwell Anderson. It is essentially a groping book; the revelation of the chapter called "Dramaturgy" does not become a philosophy. Like most studio writers, the writer endeavours to bend all her arguments to a quotation from a gentleman called Cosmo Hamilton which appears at the beginning of the book.

"Fashions change and tastes differ, but in the hearts of the great theatre-going public there is a longing for romance, for idealism, for the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice. Dull lives require a little joy, and every man and woman, however small or great, comes to the theatre to sit on a magic carpet and be wafted to the place which is seen only in dreams." Now, that is no basis for an art, and Miss Marion herself realises this for she gives another longer quotation from a more distinguished gentleman, Anton Chekhov.

"Let me remind you that the writers who we say are for all time or are simply good, and who intoxicate us, have one common and very important characteristic; they are going towards something and are summoning you toward it too, and you feel, not with your mind, but with your whole being, that they have some object, just like the ghost of Hamlet's father, who did not come and disturb the imagination for nothing.... And we? What of us?"

"We paint life as it is, but beyond that—nothing at all.... We have neither immediate nor remote aims, and in our souls there is a great empty space. We have no politics, we do not believe in revolution, we have no God, we are not afraid of ghosts, and I personally am not afraid even of death and blindness. One who wants nothing, hopes for nothing, and fears nothing, cannot be an artist."

That there is not a "great empty space" in Miss Marion's soul is amply demonstrated by her book, but to achieve the ideals expressed therein she should take heed that the great writers are "going towards something."

D.F.T.

## 1938 Photography Year Book

(Cosmopolitan Press Ltd., 21s.)

Master photographers from every part of the world annually submit thousands of prints to the Editor of the *Photography Year Book*. From these, more than 1,600 have this year been selected, providing a magnificent exhibition of camera-craft in the pages of this fine volume.

Amateur and professional photographers will find much of interest in the 1938 *Photography Year Book*. The camera worker can broaden the scope of his activities by seeing what others are doing.

After dealing specially with pictorial and commercial photography, the book examines trick photography and camera-work as an aid in science, and in decoration, for posters, catalogues, etc. There is also a detailed and well-illustrated section of advertisements.

## Promised Land

by Cedric Belfrage (Gollancz, 8s. 6d.)

What is the matter with our writers? Why are they so squeamish? Their inheritance from Shakespeare and Fielding and Swift was one of gusty bawdiness; to-day our writers seem to have lost their heritage. A stream of them have been going steadily to and from Hollywood, bright, strong, young men, men who, you would think, could do anything, but, after a few months in the town that influences world taste, they all sit down and start to write the most sorry tales of what a bad place Hollywood is and what low people film people are.

They insult us; they deny the right of a casting director to have a double bed in his office; they even go so far as to grudge the producer his "perks"—the kindly, hoary old producer, who never did anything worse than seduce a blind girl and pinch her pennies. Are these sexless young men in their right senses when they rake up old stories about Fatty Arbuckle, a man who devoted and gave his life in the end for the glory of our art. True, a woman died in a peculiar way in his flat, but anyone might do that kind of thing when drunk. Besides, Fatty Arbuckle was an artist. And do these men like Belfrage not realise that they must not take in vain the name of Rudy the Wop, alias Valentino? Don't a hundred sacred flames burn to his phallic memory?

Belfrage's book gives a fairly good, though dry, picture of the people that have had, and are having, such an influence on the rest of the world. And you may ask yourself after reading the book whether it is good for these people to have such power. It is unfortunate that the end of the book tails off into an Aimée Macpherson sermon on how the business is being righted. For however good communism is, I should say it is as far from Hollywood as it is from the Vatican.

J.T.

## LONDON THEATRE CONCERTS MOZART

March 13th

March 27th

April 10th

May 8th

TICKETS: 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d. & 6s.  
CAMBRIDGE THEATRE



# BOOK REVIEWS

## The Summing Up

by Somerset Maugham (Heinemann, 8s. 6d.)

WHAT goes on in the heart and mind of a man who writes, why and how and with what skill he does it, what belief or lack of belief attends him in his work, what is the kind and degree of his disappointment, by what measure he estimates his achievement: all of this Somerset Maugham stuffs into his "Summing Up." It is not an autobiography, but an *apologia pro vita sua*, and, when a man like Somerset Maugham gets down to *apologias* in his sixties, and after a great deal of hearty success, the fun is liable to be very good.

As a practitioner of a companion art, I am interested. Writing is one of the last corners in which a man may, with no greater capital than a penny notebook and a ha'penny pencil, bring his world alive. In films, we need thousands, and from the word go we are bound in responsibility to a dozen companions-in-arms. Our financiers have to be wheedled, and our sponsors made to share our inspiration: a task of teaching or preaching which is a whole job in itself.

The moment we get down to our craft of film our personal vanities, whether we like it or not, must out the window. Technical and creative partners surround us, and only an idiot will pretend of any film that he has been the "onlie begetter." The creative force lies in the unit, and those personal credits which flutter across the opening of a film, though they may comfort the wives and mothers of the individual film makers, give no picture of the process. I never saw a good film happen, except that three or four heads were devoted commonly to it, with personal nonsense out. I never saw personal nonsense come in and a film prosper.

Here, then, we have a situation of some social significance. On the one hand is the development in film of the unit artist, combining half a dozen powers of penetration, which may range in their quality from the purely scientific to the subjective. On the other hand, is the old one-man band of a writer giving us, so bravely, his personal act. Which is more equipped to picture our complex modern world? Does the individual find a larger or a lesser individuality in the team, and was Plato wrong? Is the one-man band strong enough in his simple soul to put his shoulder under Pelion? Read Maugham's "Summing Up", and you will find some rich evidence, one way and another.

It is, on the whole, a pathetic document, this *apologia* of a successful writer. About to die, our Mr. Maugham is worried. The critics have been unkind to him. They have called him a good craftsman, and no more. A later generation has not recognised his profundity. Again and again it rankles. For a space, the patient drops off into a quiet heart-to-heart talk on the technique of the stage, and excellent stuff it is, but back comes the cry "ma'sel, ma'sel", choking our successful writer out of countenance.



Garbo in Maugham's "The Painted Veil"

A pity it is, because Maugham is in truth a good craftsman. His patient pursuit of dramatic success and popular acceptance does honour to his courage, as well as to his skill. His careful study of popular values, and the consolidation of his success, show him to be a good business man. His desire to make the most of his talent while the public mood lasted marks him as a sensible and and practical fellow, as so many of our well-known writers are. Who, even, will blame Maugham for accepting the luxuries that success has given him? What craftsman who has taken the path of the sensible and practical would not?

The trouble is that Maugham hopes for salvation hereafter. That denial of his profundity irks him. There is an element of nostalgia as he sums up his life achievement. He does not believe in God, but spends three chapters in explaining exactly why he does not, so that God, presumably, will take note of the fact that he has really given some thought to the subject. It would be easy to say that you cannot expect anything else from a man who does not believe in God. It is the simplest way of saying that when you are so much concerned with yourself, you are bound to miss the bigger and happier swing of the objective life: that you will for ever be fanning the hereafter and never possessing it.

But there is a more amusing way of defining the trouble. I begin to think that the day of the great story-teller is over, and simply because it is, increasingly, this personal and self-examining pursuit which Maugham so brilliantly describes. The simple

salesman can no longer hold a course among the complex affairs of to-day. They cannot be compressed into his narrow act. The personal story, on which he carries his articulation of the world, becomes an ever feebler vehicle. His personal temperament, be it ever so rich, has not gusto enough to express the bearing of mass events. He is a pea-shooter storming skyscrapers.

Examine how the writers of to-day blow up their balloons to look like the whole world: intensifying on sex and psychology, whickering over escapes into Art (whatever that may mean), cross-sectioning to imitate film technique, pasticheing a thousand styles to be everything by starts and nothing long, applying the measure of space-time to the sad old paraphernalia of the personal. Why, only old Wells and old Shaw seem to know for a certainty, and a long time ago, that the personal gambit is dead as the dodo and no longer worth pursuing.

We shall always want stories, you say. The answer is: "Yes, but not seriously," and that is exactly where Mr. Maugham came in. "Yes, but not seriously" gave him a fortune, and it is "Yes, but not seriously" which worries him now, and is going to deny him that importance he most seeks. Let us be grateful to him for, himself, so brilliantly, telling us why. He has summed up not only himself, but, I think, a romantic and dying school of literature.

JOHN GRIERSON

## Three Today's

A Novel by E. G. Cousins (Methuen, 7s. 6d.)

Mr. Cousins covers some twenty-eight centuries in his novel, but he actually deals with three periods; ancient Egypt in its declining days; Tintagel in the Arthurian period; and modern London. The characters are the same in each period, being reincarnated. The final part of the novel is set in the film industry—the cinema appears and reappears throughout the book, and we get glimpses of its earliest forms in the other periods—and Mr. Cousins brings to light some of the practices which have made the business side of films one of the dirtiest rackets ever.

The main character in the final episode is a realist producer, who attempts to make films without stars, putting real people in the parts. He sells his idea for a film to two financiers, for four thousand pounds, and they resell half-interest to another financier, for the same amount. The financial side wants stars and box office appeal in the story, the producer doesn't. The struggle over this, and the defeat of the producer by his shady backers, is the story. Characters are unreal but, considering the treatment difficulties created by Mr. Cousins in attempting this story, he has written a fairly readable novel.

E.S.



# FILM GUIDE

## Shorts

**Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves** (Puppets in Gaspar-colour).

**DISTRIBUTION:** A.B.F.D.

**PRODUCTION:** Slatinay and George Pal.

|                             |                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| BELFAST: Apollo             | Mar. 2, 1 day   |
| BLAENAU FESTINOG: Forum     | Mar. 31, 3 days |
| COEDPOETH: Regent           | Mar. 17, 3 days |
| GATESHEAD: Askew            | Mar. 7, 3 days  |
| HUNSTANTON: Capitol         | Mar. 3, 3 days  |
| HACKNEY: Pavilion           | Mar. 22, 1 day  |
| KELTY: Gothenburgh          | Mar. 16, 1 day  |
| KENNINGTON: Princes         | Mar. 23, 1 day  |
| LIVERPOOL: Mere Lane Cinema | Mar. 28, 3 days |
| Princes                     | Mar. 3, 3 days  |
| LONDON: Grand, Edgware Road | Mar. 21, 1 day  |
| LLANIDLOES: Cinema          | Mar. 10, 3 days |
| NEWCASTLE: News Theatre     | Mar. 28, 6 days |
| PECKHAM: Gaumont Palace     | Mar. 24, 1 day  |
| PENISTONE: Town Hall        | Mar. 14, 3 days |
| ROTHESAY: Ritz              | Mar. 9, 4 days  |
| SCOTSWOOD: Regent           | Mar. 21, 3 days |

**Coal Face** (Poetic treatment of coal mining).

**DISTRIBUTION:** A.B.F.D.

**PRODUCTION:** John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit.

**SOUND PRODUCTION:** Alberto Cavalcanti.  
**KELTY:** Gothenburgh Mar. 3, 2 days

**Cover to Cover** (Documentary of book production).

**DISTRIBUTION:** A.B.F.D.

**PRODUCTION:** Strand Films.

**DIRECTION:** Alexander Shaw.

|                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| ATHLONE: Savoy     | Mar. 14, 3 days |
| CHILTON: Lyric     | Mar. 10, 3 days |
| COXHOE: Avenue     | Mar. 7, 3 days  |
| GATESHEAD: Askew   | Mar. 7, 3 days  |
| INGLETON: Cinema   | Mar. 21, 3 days |
| LLANIDLOES: Cinema | Mar. 10, 3 days |
| RUABON: Cinema     | Mar. 3, 3 days  |
| SCOTSWOOD: Regent  | Mar. 14, 3 days |
| SOMERCOTES: Empire | Mar. 3, 3 days  |

**Colourful Cairo** (Travelogue).

**DISTRIBUTION:** A.B.F.D.

|                                    |                 |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| ATHLONE: Savoy                     | Mar. 14, 3 days |
| KELTY: Gothenburgh                 | Mar. 21, 2 days |
| LONDON: Monseigneur, Picadilly, W. | Mar. 28, 4 days |
| MIDDLETON: Cosy                    | Mar. 4, 2 days  |
| SCOTSWOOD: Regent                  | Mar. 10, 3 days |

**Insect Oddities** (A nature study).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.

**PRODUCTION:** Cedric Mallabey.

|                            |                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| BARNET: Cinema             | Mar. 14, 6 days |
| COLWYN BAY: Odeon          | Mar. 28, 3 days |
| ISLEWORTH: Odeon           | Mar. 21, 6 days |
| LONDON: Eros News Theatre, |                 |
| Piccadilly Circus          | Mar. 7, 3 days  |
| Monseigneur, Leicester Sq. | Mar. 14, 3 days |
| Sphere,                    |                 |
| Tottenham Court. Rd.       | Mar. 14, 3 days |
| Strand News Theatre,       |                 |
| Agar St.                   | Mar. 7, 3 days  |
| Victoria Station News      |                 |
| Theatre                    | Mar. 28, 3 days |
| Walpole, Ealing            | Mar. 14, 6 days |
| NORBURY: Rex               | Mar. 6, 1 day   |

**Islands of the Bounty** (Islands associated with the famous mutiny).

**DISTRIBUTION:** A.B.F.D.

|                             |                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| BURNTISLAND: Cinema House   | Mar. 7, 3 days  |
| BALLSBRIDGE: Astoria        | Mar. 7, 3 days  |
| COED POETH: Regent          | Mar. 17, 3 days |
| CASTLE DOUGLAS: C.D. Cinema | Mar. 17, 3 days |
| DONAGHADEE: Regal           | Mar. 11, 2 days |
| MIDDLETON: Cosy             | Mar. 4, 2 days  |
| NEWMARKET: Kingsway         | Mar. 14, 3 days |
| SWALWELL: Cosy              | Mar. 31, 3 days |
| SCOTSWOOD: Regent           | Mar. 10, 3 days |
| STOKESLEY: Lyric            | Mar. 10, 3 days |
| WAKEFIELD: Palace           | Mar. 21, 3 days |
| WALTON-ON-THAMES: Capitol   | Mar. 7, 3 days  |
| WOODHOUSE: Palace           | Mar. 3, 3 days  |

## EDUCATIONAL AND ENTERTAINMENT FILMS

at the Tatler Theatre,  
 Charing Cross Road

*Saturday morning, March 5th.*

11 a.m. to 12 noon

Dick Turpin (based on Harrison Ainsworth's 'Rookwood'), Ali Baba (coloured puppets).

*March 12th, 11 a.m. to 12 noon, 2 to 3 p.m.*

**SCOTLAND and WALES**

For Matriculation and General School Certificate Students.

*March 9th, at 11 a.m. HISTORY*

Mediaeval Village, 19th Century Social History, Changes in Franchise since 1832, Development of Railways, Coal Industry, Expansion of Germany, 1870-1914.

*March 26th, at 11 a.m. BIOLOGY*

(Zoology section): Amoeba, the Frog, Hydra, Earthworm, Tortoiseshell Butterfly, Echinus, Breathing, Blood Circulation.

**Lancashire Lakeland** (Scenic beauties of Lakeland).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.

**PRODUCTION:** Pennine Films Ltd.

|                               |                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| ASHTON-U-LYNE: Majestic       | Mar. 28, 6 days |
| BIRKENHEAD: Rialto, Bebington | Mar. 3, 3 days  |
| DARLINGTON: Alhambra          | Mar. 24, 3 days |
| LIVERPOOL: Casino             | Mar. 21, 6 days |
| Tatler                        | Mar. 17, 3 days |
| PRESTON: Empress              | Mar. 10, 3 days |
| SOUTHPORT: Palladium          | Mar. 13, 7 days |

**Men Against the Sea** (Documentary of North Sea trawling).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.

**DIRECTION:** Vernon Sewell.

|                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| CHORLEY: Theatre Royal   | Mar. 7, 3 days  |
| HENDON: Classic          | Mar. 20, 4 days |
| KINGUSSIE: Picture House | Mar. 4, 2 days  |
| OSWALDTWISTLE: Palladium | Mar. 31, 3 days |
| RISHTON: Empire          | Mar. 3, 3 days  |

**Netherlands Old and New** (Travelogue of Holland and the Island of Curacao).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.

**PRODUCTION:** Cedric Mallabey

|                                  |                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| DORCHESTER: Palace               | Mar. 3, 3 days  |
| EGREMONT: Gaumont Palace         | Mar. 7, 6 days  |
| FROME: Palace                    | Mar. 10, 3 days |
| GLOSSOP: Empire                  | Mar. 7, 3 days  |
| JERSEY: Opera House              | Mar. 10, 3 days |
| LONDON: Eros News Theatre,       |                 |
| Piccadilly Circus                | Mar. 14, 3 days |
| Victoria Station News            |                 |
| Theatre                          | Mar. 7, 3 days  |
| Waterloo Station News            |                 |
| Theatre                          | Mar. 24, 3 days |
| World News, Praed St.            | Mar. 31, 3 days |
| MORECAMBE: Tower                 | Mar. 27, 1 day  |
| STRATFORD-ON-AVON: Picture House | Mar. 31, 3 days |
| WITHINGTON: Scala                | Mar. 10, 3 days |

**Night Mail** (Documentary of the northward trip of the postal special).

**DISTRIBUTION:** A.B.F.D.

**PRODUCTION:** Basil Wright, Harry Watt.

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| ARDRISSHAIG: Cinema    | Mar. 7, 4 days  |
| COVENTRY: Forum        | Mar. 6, 1 day   |
| HARRINGAY: Premier     | Mar. 3, 3 days  |
| INVERARY: Cinema       | Mar. 7, 4 days  |
| LOSSIEMOUTH: Town Hall | Mar. 17, 3 days |
| LOCHGILPHEAD: Cinema   | Mar. 7, 4 days  |
| TOBERMORY: Cinema      | Mar. 7, 4 days  |

**Nomad in the North** (Scenic film of Norway).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.

|                                                  |                 |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>PRODUCTION &amp; DIRECTION:</b> C. E. Hodges. |                 |
| BOURNEMOUTH: Premier News                        | Mar. 21, 6 days |
| FARNWORTH: Ritz                                  | Mar. 21, 3 days |
| KIRKCALDY: Regal                                 | Mar. 24, 3 days |
| MOTHERWELL: Rex                                  | Mar. 28, 3 days |
| STRATFORD-ON-AVON: Picture House                 | Mar. 14, 3 days |
| TOOTING: Classic                                 | Mar. 17, 3 days |

**People in the Parks.**

**DISTRIBUTION:** A.B.F.D.

**PRODUCTION:** Strand Films.

**DIRECTION:** Paul Burnford.

|                            |                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| BRADFORD: Elysian          | Mar. 24, 3 days |
| LEEDS: Abbey               | Mar. 10, 3 days |
| LONDON: World News Theatre | Mar. 7, 3 days  |
| NOTTINGHAM: News Theatre   | Mar. 21, 3 days |
| RETFORD: Majestic          | Mar. 17, 3 days |
| SCOTSWOOD: Regent          | Mar. 24, 3 days |
| TOWYN: Cinema              | Mar. 28, 3 days |
| WIGAN: Court               | Mar. 7, 3 days  |

**Secret Hiding Places** (Priest holes to be found in English country houses.)

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.

**DIRECTION:** Granville Squiers.

|                      |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| KIRKCALDY: Palladium | Mar. 7, 3 days  |
| LANCASTER: County    | Mar. 7, 6 days  |
| NORWICH: Haymarket   | Mar. 21, 6 days |
| TODMORDEN: Olympia   | Mar. 31, 3 days |

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## Shorts (Contd.)

**Secrets of the Stars** (Spotlight on British stages and studios).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.  
**PRODUCTION:** Argyle British Productions Ltd.  
BOURNEMOUTH: Premier News Mar. 14, 6 days  
LANCASTER: Palace Mar. 7, 6 days  
LEEDS: Holbeck, Queens Mar. 7, 3 days  
LONDON: World News Theatre  
Praed Street Mar. 14, 3 days  
PORTSMOUTH: Theatre Royal Mar. 23, 7 days  
WIDNES: Premier Mar. 21, 3 days  
WELSHPOOL: Clive Mar. 3, 3 days

**Six-Thirty Collection** (Documentary of the West End sorting office).

**DISTRIBUTION:** A.B.F.D.  
**PRODUCTION:** John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit.  
**DIRECTION:** Edgar Anstey.  
AMLWCH: Royal, Anglesey Mar. 3, 3 days

**Snow Water** (Water power in the Swiss mountains).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.  
**DIRECTION:** H. Dreyer.  
CROYDON: Classic Mar. 10, 3 days  
ISLEWORTH: Odeon Mar. 27, 1 day  
LANCASTER: Palace Mar. 28, 6 days

**Southward Ho!** (A journey across Franz-Josef glacier).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.  
**PRODUCTION:** C. E. Hodges.  
ALLOA: La Scala Mar. 3, 3 days  
DUNDEE: Empire Mar. 7, 3 days  
GLASGOW: Commodore, Scotstoun Mar. 3, 3 days  
B.B. Cinerama Mar. 14, 3 days  
GLOSSOP: Empire Mar. 3, 3 days  
GAINSBOROUGH: Grand Mar. 24, 3 days  
HEREFORD: Odeon Mar. 3, 3 days  
KIRKCALDY: Rialto Mar. 3, 3 days  
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Mar. 3, 4 days  
Victoria Stn. News Th. Mar. 24, 3 days  
MOTHERWELL: Pavilion Mar. 31, 3 days  
SIDMOUTH: Grand Mar. 24, 3 days  
SOUTHAMPTON: Cinenews Mar. 20, 4 days  
WITHINGTON: Scala Mar. 7, 3 days  
WARRINGTON: Odeon Mar. 28, 6 days

**Sunny Tessin** (Survey of the Canton Tessin, Southern Switzerland).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.  
**PRODUCTION:** Albert Picture House  
BRIGHOUSE: Empire Mar. 31, 3 days  
BARNLEY: Empire Mar. 28, 6 days  
CINDERFORD: Palace Mar. 31, 3 days  
DARLINGTON: Alhambra Mar. 7, 6 days  
KETTERING: Electric Pavilion Mar. 31, 3 days  
LONDON: Kings Hall, Penge Mar. 31, 3 days  
LIVERPOOL: Empress Mar. 21, 6 days  
Gaumont, Princes Park Mar. 24, 3 days  
Plaza Mar. 24, 3 days  
Tatler Mar. 14, 3 days  
MANCHESTER: Regal, Levenshulme Mar. 7, 3 days  
NEW BRIGHTON: Trocadero Mar. 3, 3 days  
REDDITCH: Gaumont Palace Mar. 24, 3 days  
WAKEFIELD: Empire Mar. 28, 6 days

**This Other Eden** (A trip down the river Eden, in Westmorland).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.  
**PRODUCTION:** Pennine Films Ltd.  
BIRKENHEAD: Plaza Mar. 28, 6 days  
CARLISLE: Palace Mar. 28, 6 days  
CROYDON: Hippodrome Mar. 6, 1 day  
HYTHE: Kent, Grove Mar. 21, 3 days  
INVERNESS: Empire Mar. 10, 3 days  
LONDON: Monseigneur, Charing X Rd. Mar. 17, 3 days  
NORBURY: Rex Mar. 20, 1 day  
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: News Theatre Mar. 3, 3 days  
SIDMOUTH: Grand Mar. 14, 3 days  
SOUTHWOLD: Cinema Mar. 7, 3 days  
ST. LEONARDS: Kinema Mar. 3, 3 days  
SOUTHPORT: Palace Mar. 3, 3 days

**To-day We Live** (The depressed areas of Wales).

**DISTRIBUTION:** A.B.F.D.  
**PRODUCTION:** Strand Films.  
**DIRECTION:** Ralph Bond and R. I. Grierson.  
BATLEY: Victoria Mar. 14, 3 days  
CREWE: Palace Mar. 28, 6 days  
CARCROFT: Cinema Mar. 4, 2 days  
EDLINGTON: Cinema Mar. 25, 3 days  
THURNSCOPE: Cinema Mar. 21, 3 days

**Town and Gown** (Buildings, scenery and life of Oxford and Cambridge).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.  
**PRODUCTION:** Peter Collin.  
BRIDGWATER: Palace Mar. 21, 3 days  
CIRENCESTER: Picture House Mar. 28, 3 days  
CHIPPENHAM: Gaumont Palace Mar. 10, 3 days  
CHEPSTOW: Palace Mar. 10, 3 days  
EGREMONT: Gaumont Palace Mar. 3, 3 days  
HYTHE: Grove Mar. 24, 3 days  
JERSEY: Opera House Mar. 28, 6 days  
LIVERPOOL: Bedford, Walton Mar. 21, 6 days  
Gaumont, Princes Park Mar. 17, 3 days  
Plaza Mar. 17, 3 days  
Rivoli, Aigburth Mar. 31, 3 days  
Tatler Mar. 3, 3 days  
MOTHERWELL: La Scala Mar. 7, 6 days  
MANSFIELD: Rock P.H. Mar. 17, 3 days  
NORTH SHIELDS: Princes Mar. 28, 6 days  
NEW BRIGHTON: Trocadero Mar. 21, 3 days  
SALTAIRE: Picture House Mar. 28, 3 days  
SOUTHPORT: Palladium Mar. 14, 6 days  
WEYMOUTH: Regent Mar. 14, 6 days  
WISHAW: Cinema Mar. 7, 6 days

**Tropical Springtime** (Travelogue on Costa Rica).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.  
**PRODUCTION:** Cedric Mallabey.  
CHEPSTOW: Palace Mar. 28, 3 days  
EGREMONT: Gaumont Palace Mar. 28, 6 days  
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd. Mar. 14, 7 days  
MONMOUTH: Picture House Mar. 24, 3 days  
NORTH SHIELDS: Princes Mar. 21, 6 days

**Way to the Sea** (Documentary of the roads and railways from London to the coast).

**DISTRIBUTION:** A.B.F.D.  
**PRODUCTION:** Strand Films.  
**DIRECTION:** J. B. Holmes.  
BRADFORD: Elysium Mar. 24, 3 days  
KELTY: Gothenburgh Mar. 28, 2 days  
LIMERICK: Lyric Mar. 31, 3 days  
NEWFIELD: Grand Mar. 10, 3 days  
OXFORD: Scala Mar. 6, 4 days  
SALCOMBE: Cinema Mar. 3, 3 days  
STOCKPORT: Brinksway Mar. 11, 2 days  
SWINDON: Rink Mar. 21, 6 days  
TOWYN: Cinema Mar. 28, 3 days  
WHALLEY: Co-op Cinema Mar. 10, 3 days

**Wheel and Woe** (The evolution of the motor-car).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Kinograph.  
**PRODUCTION:** Liberty.  
**DIRECTION:** W. G. Duncalf.  
BARNET: Cinema Mar. 7, 6 days  
BOURNEMOUTH: Premier News Mar. 28, 6 days  
CHATHAM: Electric Mar. 27, 7 days  
CHORLEY: Theatre Royal Mar. 21, 3 days  
HULL: National Mar. 10, 3 days  
LEITH: Capitol Mar. 28, 3 days  
NORTHWICH: Pavilion Mar. 3, 3 days  
NEWTOWN: Regent Mar. 21, 3 days  
OSWALDTWISTLE: Palladium Mar. 17, 3 days  
TODMORDEN: Olympia Mar. 14, 3 days  
WELSHPOOL: Clive Mar. 24, 3 days

**Windmill in Barbados**

**DISTRIBUTION:** A.B.F.D.  
**PRODUCTION:** E.M.B.  
**DIRECTOR:** Basil Wright.  
COEDPOETH: Regent Mar. 10, 3 days

## Foreign Films

**The Broken Jug** (German).

**DIRECTION:** Gustav Veicky  
**STARRING:** Emil Jannings  
Lina Carstiens  
Angela Sallaker  
LONDON: Berkeley Indefinitely

**Un Carnet de Bal** (Winner of the Mussolini Cup—French).

**DIRECTION:** Julien Duvivier  
**STARRING:** Françoise Rosay  
Harry Baur  
Pierre Blanchard  
Fernandel  
Raimu  
Robert Lynen  
LONDON: Studio One Indefinitely

**La Grande Illusion** (French).

**PRODUCTION:** Réalisation d'Art Cinématographique  
**DIRECTION:** Jean Renoir  
**STARRING:** Erich von Stroheim  
Jean Gabin  
Dita Parlo  
LONDON: Academy Till end of March

**Hortobagy** (Hungarian).

**DIRECTION:** Georg Hollering  
LONDON: Academy Following *La Grande Illusion*

**La Mort du Cygne** (French).

**PRODUCTION:** Les Films Osso  
**DIRECTION:** Jean Benoit-Levy  
**STARRING:** Jean Perier  
Mady Berry  
The Corps de Ballet from the Paris Opera House  
LONDON: Curzon Till end of March

**Nina Petrovna** (French).

**DIRECTION:** V. Tourjansky  
**STARRING:** Fernand Graby  
Isa Miranda  
LONDON: Curzon Following *La Mort du Cygne*

**The Oyster Princess** (German).

**PRODUCTION:** Algassa Films, Berlin  
**DIRECTION:** E. W. Emo  
**STARRING:** Gusti Wolf  
Theo Lingon  
LONDON: Berkeley Following *The Broken Jug*

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Look at the accompanying illustrations. They are enlargements from two rolls of Ciné-Kodak Pan. Film, both of them over-exposed from f5.6 to f1.9, and under-exposed from f11 to f16—the correct stop being f8. The left strip shows you how you are “punished” for your errors by straight processing; the right strip shows how the Reversal Process “lets you off,” giving you positives of an almost constant density whatever the vagaries of your exposures.

Another big advantage of Ciné-Kodak Reversal Films is their almost complete absence of graininess when projected. In the course of processing, the negative image, consisting of the larger grains, is bleached out, leaving only the minute unexposed grains to form the positive that you see on the screen. This applies with equal force to the duplicates which by the same reversal process can be made from the original positive.

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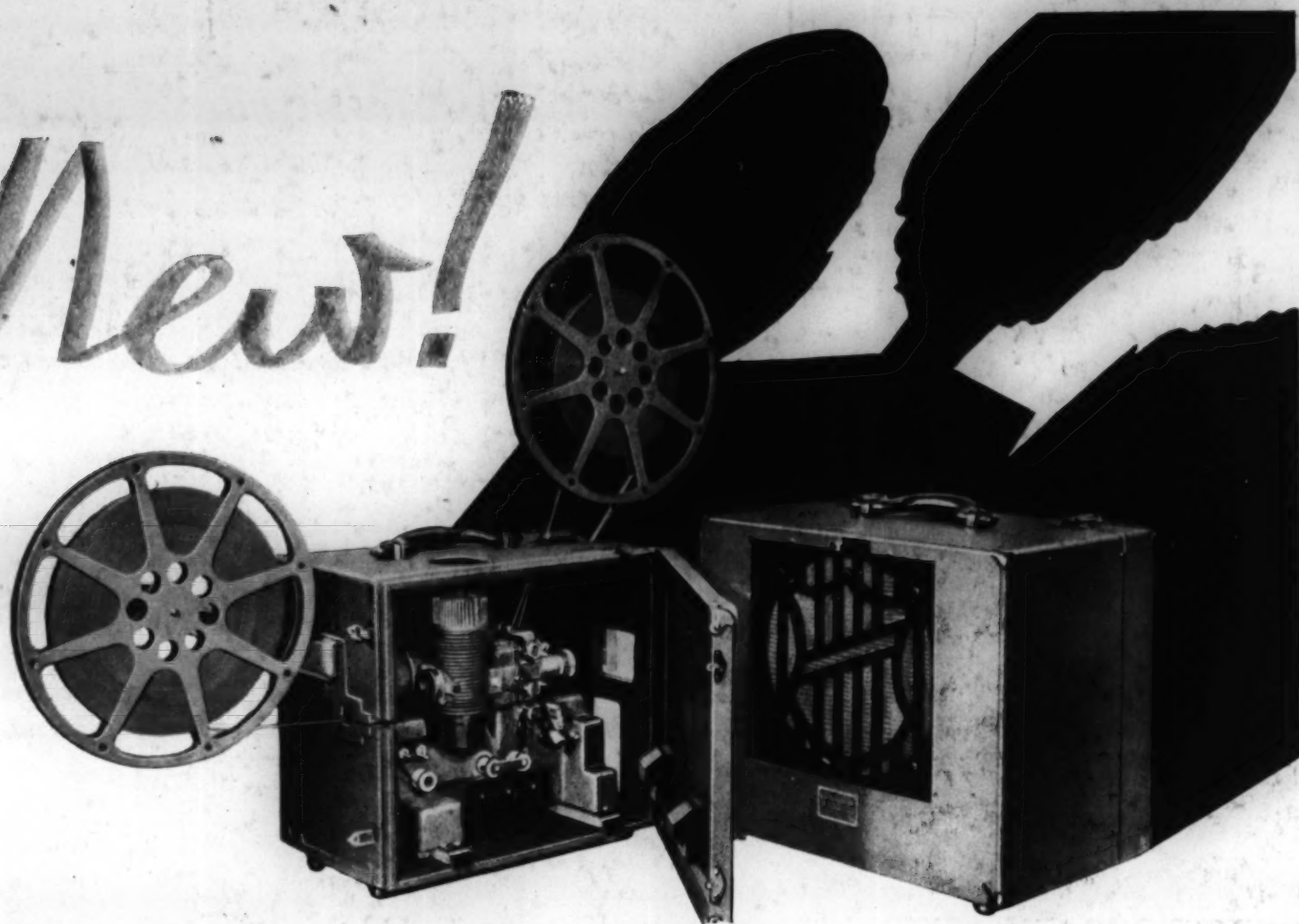


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In it are embodied a host of new features lending greater flexibility, plus the same basic engineering principles that have made the other models so successful.

Filmosound 138-J is the Bell & Howell answer to the demand for an enclosed 138. It is a two-case job, with its projector fully enclosed in a "blimp" case. The second case contains a 12-inch speaker. The projector provides both clutch and reverse so that the operator can emphasise or review any portion of the film, and it may be used for silent as well as sound films. This two-case Filmosound is particularly suitable for use in Schools, Halls, Institutes, and the Home—in fact, wherever the audience and projector occupy the same room. Filmosound 138-J has an exclusive speaker-hiss eliminator, which is especially desirable at low sound volumes; "floating film" protection; 750-watt lamp; 1600 ft. film capacity. These features, plus the fact that the sound volume and picture brilliance are adequate for audiences up to 500, make Filmosound 138-J a popular model for the majority of occasions.

The new model 138-F is the same single-case Filmosound which has been so widely accepted for smaller audience use, but to it have been added reverse gear and still-picture clutch, as well as many minor improvements. The standard 8-inch speaker is regular equipment.

Another improved Filmosound is the 130-D, the powerful 1000-watt Auditorium model. It has now an amplifier smoothly styled in the modern mode with popular sloping control panel, and capable of an unusually high output. With twin speakers, switch control so that single speaker, when used, cannot be overloaded, and new microphone input circuit. This model is available in four combinations—one or two projectors with amplifier, and one or two speakers. When two projectors are used there is no interruption in long programmes, for as one machine is switched off at end of reel, the other is automatically started. The twin speakers mean not only improved sound distribution in large auditoriums, but they also provide an efficient system capable of handling the unusually high output of the new amplifier.

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